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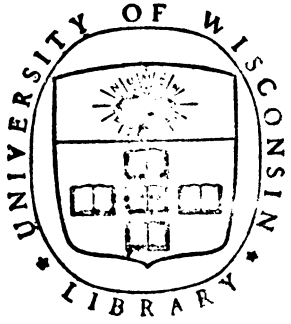

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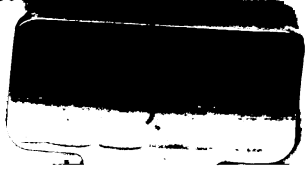

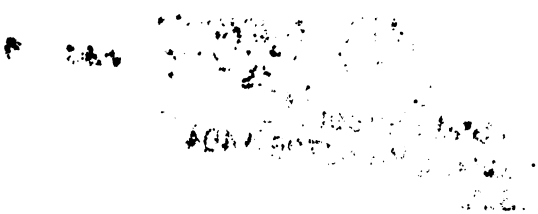

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VOLTAIRE.

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THE

PHILOSOPHICAL DICTIONARY

1824

OF

M. DE VOLTAIRE;

François Marie Arouet de,
1694-1778.

WITH A

LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

FROM THE MOST APPROVED LONDON EDITION.

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LIFE

OF

M. DE VOLTAIRE.

TO attempt to write a strictly original life of the author of *The Philosophical Dictionary*, would be to attempt an impracticability, since the world is so universally informed of his character, life, and writings, through the biographical researches of his friend and pupil, the elegant, though unfortunate Condorcet; the leading features of whose relation, it will be our endeavour to delineate with conciseness and veracity.

Whether we regard Voltaire as a politician, whose influential writings created a new mode of thinking in the school of philosophy; or, as a poet, philosopher, and historian, he must be ranked as one of the brightest ornaments of the country which gave him birth.

While Voltaire was the object of jealousy, persecution, and hatred, to the priesthood and the bigotted, he was eloquently advocating the cause of freedom and religious toleration, and strenuously supporting his favourite maxim—

> Mankind are all stamp'd equal at their birth!
> Virtue, alone, the difference makes on earth.

To account for such illiberality and injustice, is not at all difficult. Voltaire had boldly asserted his opinions, in defiance of the agents of tyranny and superstition: he had waged a deadly war against prejudice and ignorance: he had struck a fatal blow at the root of their power: and he had relaxed the hitherto

strongly-knit joints of the government of error, hypocrisy, and fanatacism. It was dangerous ground to tread upon, where the cormorants of the church and state glutted their appetites on the labours of the poor, the ignorant, and the superstitious, who adored and obeyed the "throned power" of *right divine*. Systems that will not stand the test of truth, cannot be immaculate; and systems that profess to govern our morals, and direct our eternal happiness, ought to be as uncontaminated as the dew of heaven.

Thus shoals of hireling scribblers, and even men, they say, of some talent, among the clergy, envious of his great abilities, prejudiced and alarmed at the declaration of his religious principles, in a country where superstition reigned, did not hesitate to traduce the character, and arraign the works, of a man, whose talents so very far eclipsed their own; but the labours of such defamers were shortly to be obliterated from the annals of literature; while it was impossible to transmit even their names to posterity, through any other medium, than such a remembrance as the *Dunciad* of the celebrated Pope.

Francis-Marie Arouet de Voltaire, was born at Chatenay, near Paris, on the 20th of February, 1694, but was not baptized till the 22d of November, of the same year, owing to his excessive weakness. His father, Francis Arouet, (ancient notary at Paris,) held the office of treasurer of the *Chambre des Comptes;* and his mother, Margeret d'Aumart, was of a noble family of Poitou. Young Arouet, conformably to the custom, then generally established among the rich burgesses, or cadets, assumed the name of the paternal estate, *Voltaire*, leaving to the eldest son the name of the family. M. Arouet had the good fortune to procure important advantages to his sons, with respect to their education, without which genius cannot attain its meridian splendour.

Voltaire was admitted to the college of Jesuits. The professor of rhetoric, father Poree, under whose tuition he was placed, was a man of considerable eminence, and soon discerned, in the youth, the elements of genius, the germs of a great mind. Father Jay, also, observed the independence which characterized the opinions of his pupil.

On leaving college, he found a home in the dwelling of the abbe Chateauneuf, his god-father, and an old friend of his mother's. The abbe introduced the ingenious youth, already distinguished by several *jeux d'esprits*, to his intimate friend, the celebrated Mad. Ninon l'Enclos, who was pleased with the boy, and presented him with two thousand livres, (about eighty guineas,) for the purpose of purchasing a small library.

Thus, in his youth, fortunate circumstances taught him, even before his judgment was formed, to regard study as an honourable occupation; and he, also, became intimate with persons who were superior to vulgar prejudice; who informed him that the mind of man is born free, and that he had a right to judge of every subject that came within his knowledge.

Shortly after this, Mad. Maintenon introduced him to the court of the aged Louis XIV. A hypocritical and persecuting spirit was very prevalent at this period: the reputation of incredulity had deprived Catinat of that confidence, which was due to the purity of his character, and his talents for war. The duc de Vendome was publicly reproached for his inattention to mass; and, to his want of devotion, was ascribed the success of the heretic Marlborough, and the infidel Eugene.

Voltaire, young, gay, and spirited, was, about this period, introduced, by the abbe Chaulieu, into those circles, at once useful and congenial to a mind susceptible of improvement. They were composed of the aristocracy and the wits of the day, among whom he most highly esteemed the duc de Sully, the marquess de la Fare, the abbes Servien and Courtin, the prince de Conti, the grand prior de Vendome, marshal de Villars, and the chevalier de Bouillon: he naturally imbibed, from such eminent personages, that simplicity of taste which distinguished the court of Louis XIV.

Voltaire's father intended him for the law, and when he heard that his son moved in the society of men of rank, and that he composed verses, he lost the hope of reclaiming him, but solicited the marquess de Chateauneuf, appointed ambassador to Holland, to take him with him, in the quality of page; but this exile was not of long duration. Madam du Noyer, known by her *lettres gallentes*, had separated from her husband, and lived at the Hague with her two daughters. She pretended zeal for the Protestant religion, but her real profession was that of writing libels, and forming intrigues. Voltaire had, through her artifices, been drawn into a premature attachment for one of her daughters, but the mother, finding that little could be made of this affair, sounded the alarm, and complained to the ambassador, who command his protege to break off the connexion, and soon sent him home, for the disobedience of his command. In the mean time, Madam du Noyer did not fail to make the most of this adventure. She printed his letters to her daughter, hoping that his name, already well known, would the more readily circulate her work, and she seized this opportunity to coast of her maternal

delicacy and rigidity, in the same libel in which she dishonoured her daughter.

Returned to Paris, our author's tender passion soon subsided, and he was somewhat relieved, in not being obliged to provide for the daughter of an intriguing mother. But M. Arouet, dissatisfied with his conduct in Holland, and perceiving him to be obstinate in his love of letters, and of living in the great world, entirely discarded him. Finding his father resolute, he addressed letters to him, full of humility, tenderness, and contrition; but they proved ineffectual. He then formed the design of going to America, and requested a sum of money to pay his passage, and to be permitted to throw himself at his parent's feet. This, also, was denied him, and his father resolved to place him in the house of an attorney. The son of Apollo, however, did not long remain there. M. Caumartin, an intimate friend of M. Arouet's, felt for the restraints which the youth laboured under, in being debarred from studies congenial to his taste, and of associating with the literary world. He obtained permission to take him with him to his estate of St. Ange, where, removed from dangerous society, he would be better enabled to reflect upon the choice of a profession. Voltaire here met the elder Caumartin, a venerable man, partial to the memory of Henry IV. and his minister Sully, then too much neglected. He had been intimately acquainted with the most learned characters of the reign of Louis XIV. was versant in the anecdote of that reign, and took delight in relating it. Voltaire was inspired with enthusiasm for these two heroes, and, after his return from St. Ange, he commenced an epic poem, of which Henry IV. is the hero. The study of the history of France now became one of his most ardent pursuits. It is to this journey we owe *The Henriade* and *The Age of Louis XIV.* This prince was just dead, and the people, whose idol he had been for so long a period; that same people, who had pardoned his vain-glory, his profusion, his love of favorites, and had applauded his persecutions against the Protestants, now insulted his memory with indecent joy. They became as prodigal of lampoons on his memory, as they had been profuse of panegyrics during his life. Voltaire, being accused of writing of one of these satires, was condemned to the Bastile on scarcely any other evidence, than the poem concluding, with this singular line—

These evils I've seen, and I'm scarcely one score.

which the police considered as conclusive, from corresponding

with his age, though he had reached twenty-two years; and this was sufficient to deprive him of liberty. While in prison, he sketched his poem of *The League*, corrected his tragedy of *Œdipus*, and composed a very humourous poem on his confinement. The duc d'Orleans, being informed of his innocence, procured his liberation, and presented him with a sum of money. "Monseigneur," said Voltaire, "I thank you kindly, for enabling me to defray the expence of my board; but I pray, that I may not, in future, incur such expence for lodging."

The tragedy of *Œdipus* was perfomed in 1718, and its success was so great, that marshal de Villars said to Voltaire, in returning from one of the representations of it, "The nation is under great obligations to your midnight labours."—"It would be still more obliged to me," replied the poet, "if I could write as well as you know how to speak and to act."

Voltaire was now known as the author of some witty fugitive pieces and epistles, in which we discover the philosophy of Chaulieu, with more mind and precision, and of an ode, that had vainly competed for the prize at the Academie Francaise, when that learned body very gravely gave the preference to a ridiculous poem of the abbe Jarri's, about the decorations of the altar of *Notre dame*.

Actuated by a superior and independent taste, he was unwilling to mix love with the horror of the subject of ŒDIPUS, and he had the courage to present it to the comedians, without having paid that tribute to custom; but it was rejected. The committee found fault with the author, who attempted to innovate on, and reform, the taste of the times. "This young man," said Dufresne, "deserves his pride punished: we ought to perform his play with that monstrous scene from Sophocles."

M. Arouet, who still wished his son to become an advocate, went to see the new tragedy performed: he was melted into tears: he embraced the author amidst the felicitations of the ladies of the court; after which he no longer indulged the desire of his becoming a judge.

At one of the representations of ŒDIPUS, Voltaire appeared on the stage, wearing the queue of a high-priest: the lady of marshal Villars requested to know who that young man was, who wished to disturb the performers. She was informed it was *the Author!* This ludicrous incident, which bespoke a man superior to the littleness of self-love, inspired the lady with the desire of knowing him. Voltaire, being admitted into her company, acquired a tender passion for her, the most serious he had ever experienced. It led his mind from

his studies, which had become habitual; but he was nonsuited, and he never spoke of it but with sentiments of regret, bordering on remorse. Delivered from his attachment, he consoled himself by his studies, proceeded with his HENRIADE, and wrote his tragedy of ARTEMIRE. A young actress, brought forward by Voltaire, performed the principal character, and was both his mistress and his pupil. That public, who had done justice to his former effort, were severe with ARTEMIRE, the ordinary effect of all first success. This tragedy only procured him permission to return to Paris, when a new calumny against the court, and his connection with the opponents of the regent, (among whom were the duc de Richelieu, and the famous baron de Gortz,) was the cause of his speedy removal.

In 1722, Voltaire accompanied Mad. Rupelmonde to Holland. Here his acquaintance with Rousseau commenced, whose misfortunes he pitied, and whose talents he admired. Voltaire consulted him, respecting his poem of THE HENRIADE, then called THE LEAGUE, and showed him his EPISTLE TO URANIA, the first specimen of his treatise in verse, questions of morality and philosophy. Rousseau recited to him an ODE TO POSTERITY, on which Voltaire observed, that he feared it would never descend *to the place of its address*. This severity was not passed unnoticed, for, when Voltaire read to him a satire he had composed, Rousseau told him, he thought it would be wise to suppress it, lest the world should imagine he had lost his prudence, and retained only his virulence. After such mutual reproaches, the two poets soon became irreconcileable. Rousseau broke loose upon Voltaire, who patiently submitted to his abuse for fifteen years.

On returning to Paris, in 1724, he produced his MARIAMNE. This was the subject of ARTEMIRE, under a new title, with the plot less complicated and romantic: it surpassed the style of Racine, and was performed forty nights.

In 1726, he was again committed to the Bastile, for having offended the chevalier Rohan, by these expressions: "I hang not upon a great name, but I know how to honour that which I bear." This base and dastardly courtier revenged himself, by causing his servants to insult him, without compromising his personal safety. It was in the hall of the hotel de Sully, where he had dined, that he received this outrage. Voltaire, instead of requiring justice by law, thought redress by arms more noble. He is said to have sought his adversary with anxiety, but also with indiscretion. Rohan solicited M. le duc, to cause him to be put into the Bastile; and to obtain, more speedily, the order for his arbitrary imprisonment, showed M. le duc, who was

blind of an eye, the verses which Voltaire had addressed to his mistress, the marchioness de Prie:

Io, without dissembling art,
Knew how to cheat all Argus' eyes!
But here one eye acts Argus' part,
To grieve were frail—to laugh were wise!

After six months imprisonment, he obtained his liberty upon condition of quitting the kingdom. England became the place of his exile. From that moment, he felt himself called upon to destroy every species of prejudice, by which his country was enslaved. This great design, of becoming the benefactor of a whole nation, by his single powers of genius, in rooting out their prevailing errors and prejudices, inflamed his soul and inspired his courage.

He printed the HENRIADE in London. George I. and the princess of Wales, who was afterwards queen, made him presents, and procured him many subscribers, which strengthened the poet's finances. To his stay in England, the world is indebted for the tragedies of BRUTUS and THE DEATH OF CÆSAR. BRUTUS possesses the energy of Corneille, with more lustre, purity, and naivete, combined with the sustained elegance of Racine. Never had political matters been displayed on the stage with more force, eloquence, and precision, than in the first act of BRUTUS: the fifth act is a *chef d' œuvre* of the pathetic.

His ESSAY ON EPIC POETRY was written in England, and in the English language. His fortune, being now considerably augmented by the profits of his works, by the kindness of princes, and the shares he possessed in various maritime speculations, and the public funds, he returned to France in 1728. The decease of his father and brother left him in possession of more than 40,000 livres of rent; the money he had gained in England, he put into the lottery, established by Deforts, comptroller-general of the finances. The famous Paris Duvernay having produced him an interest in the victualling of the army, he retired with 800,000 livres, which produced to him about 130,000 livres yearly rent; and, to the advantage of having such a fortune, he joined the satisfaction of owing it chiefly to his own abilities.

Such an acquisition of riches, to men of genius, is generally supposed to operate in repressing its growth, but his fortune was never impeached as a check to his ardour in cultivating the belles lettres, which was ever his predominant pursuit.

In 1730, he brought out his BRUTUS, which did not obtain great success. Fontenelle advised him to renounce this

species of dramatic writing, which he thought was not natural to him. The great Corneille, uncle to Fontenelle, had given the same advice to Racine. Voltaire complied with this opinion, by producing ZAIRE, a work possessing as much pathos as was ever exhibited on the stage since PHÆDRE. Its success far surpassed his expectations. This is the first performance, where, after quitting the tracts of Corneille and Racine, he displayed art, talent, and style, far beyond his former powers. Never was love exhibited more sincere and impassioned, never did its imaginative purity excite such sensibility, and never did poet depict the jealousy of a soul so amiable and generous as Orosmane, whom we cannot hate, even at the moment we shudder, previous to his sacrificing Zaire, who, so virtuous and interesting, we cannot but love. This play was followed by ADELAIDE DE GUESCLIN, which was hissed on its first representation. MARIAMNE, also, was unsuccessful. A wag, in the pit, partly caused this, by exclaiming, "the queen drinks!" ADELAIDE, however, was altered, and appeared again, under the title of the DUC DE FOIX, and was received with the most unbounded applause.

About this time he first printed his TEMPLE OF TASTE. In this excellent work, he criticised the writers of the last century, and even some of his cotemporaries. Time has comfirmed his opinions, which were then considered sacrilegious. His PHILOSOPHICAL LETTERS, or, LETTERS ON THE ENGLISH NATION, were the epoch of a literary revolution. He commenced, by initiating the public into a knowledge of English philosophy and literature; but the clergy, always fearful of retrograding, by the dissemination of freedom of thought, demanded and obtained their suppression, by an arrest of council. The parliament ordered the work to be burnt, after the custom of old times, invented by Tiberius. In the meantime, the miracles of the deacon of Paris, and of father Girard, covered both sides with ridicule and opprobrium. It was to be expected they would unite themselves against a man, who was bold enough to disseminate the doctrines of reason.

Voltaire now resolved to alter his mode of life, he placed part of his fortune in foreign countries, and quitted the capital. Curiosity led him to the siege of Phillipsburg. "Monsieur," said marshal Berwick, "you come no doubt, to see the trenches?"—"No, no, marshal," replied Voltaire; "I task myself to sing your exploits, without having the ambition to participate in them."

He was, at this period, intimately connected with Mad. du Chatelet, with whom he studied the philosophy of Leibnitz and

Newton, and lived retired many years, at Cirey, enjoying the society of a few select friends. Mad. du Chatelet possessed an estate near de Vassi, in Champagne, at which place was erected a gallery for experiments upon light and electricity.

After having dedicated some years to the study of physics, he consulted Clariaut upon the progress he had made, who had the frankness to tell him, that, with the most obstinate labour, he might not expect to arrive even at the eminence of a *savant mediocre;* and that he was but sacrificing time, that would be better devoted to poetry, morality, and philosophy. Voltaire followed his advice, and soon began to pursue those studies which were more congenial to his mind. The retreat of Cirey is classic ground, for here he composed his ALZIRE, ZULIME, MAHOMET, and completed his DISCOURSE ON MAN; here he wrote his HISTORY OF CHARLES XII, prepared THE AGE OF LOUIS XIV., and compiled the materials for his ESSAY ON THE MANNERS AND SPIRIT OF NATIONS.

ALZIRE and MAHOMET are immortal monuments of the height to which the union of genius, poetry, and philosophy, are capable of elevating the tragic art. We behold in ALZIRE, the elevated virtues, combined with the savage impetuosity, of a man of nature, struggling against the vices of corrupt society, by fanaticism and ambition, and ceding to virtue, made perfect by reason in the soul of Alzares, or in the dying and undeceived Guzman. The most dangerous of vices is fanaticism: Voltaire dragged the monster forth, and employed, for his destruction, those powerful effects the drama alone can produce.

MAHOMET was first acted at Lille, in 1741. During its first representation, a letter from the king of Prussia was handed to Voltaire, informing him of the victory of Molwitz. He interrupted the performance, that the letter might be read to the audience: "You see," said he, to his friends around him, "that this *play* of Molwitz, will add to the success of mine." This play was afterwards risked at Paris, but the opposition of the fanatics, excited by the weakness of cardinal de Fleury, drew forth its condemnation. Voltaire, however, seized the opportunity of gaining the friendship of Benedict XIV. by sending him this piece, with two Latin verses for his portrait.

In return for this, Lambertini, who was an amiable man, though possessing much spirit, kindly answered him, and presented him with two medals. Crebillon, censer of police, more scrupulous than the pope, would not even allow it to be performed in Paris.

In 1751, d'Alembert, appointed by the count d'Argenson,

to examine MAHOMET, had the courage to approve of it, and to expose himself to the hatred of priests, the devout, and the men of letters who were leagued with them. They could never pardon Voltaire's having said, "Priests have found that which was sought for so eagerly by Archimedes—a point in heaven on which to prop themselves, for the purpose of lifting the earth."

ZULIME was unsuccessful. The DISCOURSE ON MAN are amongst the happiest productions of the Gallic muse. THE LIFE OF CHARLES XII. was the first historical work he published. The style is flowing and beautiful; the heroic exploits succeed in a continuous train, without interruption; consisting of brilliant expeditions, singular anecdotes, and romantic events, which continually buoy up the interest and curiosity. It is called romantic, however, from no other reason, than that of the historian imparting to it all the interest of such fanciful productions.

Voltaire vainly imagined that the retreat of Cirey would screen him from persecution. He could only conceal his person, but his fame was an object of envy to his enemies. A libel, in which his whole life was calumniated, appeared, to disturb his repose. He was attacked, as if his rank had been that of a prince, or a prime minister, because he excited their envy and admiration.

The author of this scurrilous libel, was the abbe Desfontaines, a man, who owed to Voltaire his liberty, and perhaps his life, being accused of a vice, which both the legislature and morality rank as a crime. Our author had procured him a retreat on the estate of one of his friends; and there Desfontaines wrote the libel on his benefactor. He was, however, compelled to burn it; but he never pardoned Voltaire, for having saved his life.

The friendship our author formed, about this time, with the prince-royal of Prussia, was one of the causes of the excessive spleen of his enemies. Young Frederic had received, from his father, only the education of a soldier; but nature had bestowed on him the gift of an ingenious and elevated mind. He was sent to Rhinsberg by his father, who, having conceived the design of beheading him as a deserter, because he had attempted to travel without his permission, yielded to the remonstrances of the ministers, and satisfied himself by causing the prince to be present at the execution of one of his companions, who travelled with him.

Frederic, enamoured of the French language, and partial to the studies of poetry and philosophy, chose Voltaire for his

confidant and preceptor: they submitted reciprocally their works to each other, and the prince enjoyed the benefit of Voltaire's counsel and instruction.

The young prince, on ascending the throne, testified no change in his opinion of our author: the cares of government never weakened his pursuit of letters, and Voltaire requested of him only to make his government of the state consistent with his philosophy. He visited him at Wesel, where he was astonished to find the young monarch on a camp-bed, in uniform, shivering with a fever. At this time Voltaire wrote him that memoir which was supported by the bayonet; and he returned to Paris well satisfied, that his hero was a just and amiable man. This monarch sent pressing invitations to our author, but he refused them, and preferred the friendship of Mad. du Chatelet, to the favours of a king whom he admired.

When cardinal Fleury died, Voltaire was designed to succeed him, in the French Academy. At this period, his *chef d'œuvre* of MEROPE first appeared, then the only tragedy, whose pathos melts the soul into tears, without the incitement of the misfortunes of love. The pit was agitated with enthusiasm. The audience demanded, for the first time, to see the author. This honour, bestowed upon a great poetical genius, was afterwards prodigally lavished upon writers of very *mediocre* talents.

Voltaire, though concealed, was obliged to appear before the audience. He entered the box of the lady of marshal de Villars, who, presented him to the house, and they desired the young dutchess de Villars to kiss him. She was obliged to comply with the wish of the public, intoxicated with pleasure and admiration.—"Thus have I been kissed in public," says he, in a letter to his friend d'Aiguebre, "as was Alain Chartier, by the princess Margaret of Scotland; but he was asleep, and I was awake."

He was now ambitious to possess a place in the academy, for the purpose of putting himself under the ægis of that body, and as a shelter from new opposition. The duc de Richelieu had, from infancy, been the friend of Voltaire, and though a man of little amiability of character, he was respected by our author, more from the recollection of youthful affection and habit, than from the conviction of his intrinsic merit. He promoted Voltaire's interest with Mad. de Chateauneuf, whose influence in politics was very great; but Maurepas, strongly infected with the vanity of shining at table, could not suffer his superiority to deprive him of the display of wit, with which it was not too ridiculous, at that time, to flatter a minister of

state. His election to the place of academician, vacant by the death of cardinal de Fleury, was opposed by Maurepas, and Boyer was triumphant.

The ministry soon after perceived, how necessary the alliance of the king of Prussia was to France. But this monarch feared to engage anew with a power, whose wavering policy could not inspire confidence. Voltaire, it was supposed, might induce him to alter his opinion, and he was secretly charged with this mission.

After having passed some time with Frederic, who constantly refused his alliance with France he had the address to divine the true cause of his failure: it was that weakness, which caused the French minister to decline war with England, and to appear to sue for peace, when France had a right to dictate its conditions. He returned to Paris, and published an account of his journey.

The marquess d'Argenson was called to the ministry. He was a man of taste, a patriot, and lover of philosophy. His accomplishments and learning had made him acquainted with Voltaire, whom he more than once employed to write manifestoes, declarations, and despatches, the style of which was required to be correct and dignified. The manifesto of the pretender, on his descent into Scotland, was the composition of our author.

Besides the marquess, he had the support of Mad. d'Etiole, afterwards marchioness de Pompadour, who employed him to compose a piece in celebration of the dauphin's nuptials. He produced the PRINCESS OF NAVARRE, which procured him the honour of gentleman in ordinary of the chamber, and the title of historiographer of France. It was on that circumstance he made the following remark: "My HENRIADE, ZAIRE, and ALZIRE, never attracted the notice of the king; but now I have got honours showered on me for a farce, calculated for little else than a fair. This was judging too severely of this work, which is replete with dignified and touching gallantry. This favour of the court, however, did not throw open the doors of the academy. He was obliged to write a letter to father Latour, wherein he declares his respect for religion, and, that which was also necessary, his respect for the Jesuits. Though this was not to add to the lustre of the name of Voltaire, it was politic, as it certainly would, in a great measure, have been a safeguard against persecution.

He at last obtained it, in 1746, and was the first who was not obliged to conform to the tedious custom of replying to the speech of reception, recapitulating the praises of cardinal

Richelieu and Louis XIV. This example was a precedent in future.

A new storm of libels, occasioned only by his reception, now burst upon him, and he had not the courage to withstand it. He returned once more to Cirey, and went immediately afterwards, with the marchioness du Chatelet, to Luneville, to the court of king Stanislaus. Here he lived in great tranquillity, until he had the misfortune to lose his amiable friend. Mad. du Chatelet died at the moment she terminated the translation of Newton, the excessive labour of which had shortened her days. Stanislaus came to console Voltaire, and to weep with him. Soon after this he returned to Paris, and re-commenced his literary labours, for the purpose of mitigating his sorrow.

Voltaire was disgusted at hearing the fashionable, and men of letters in particular, prefer Crebillon to him, not less for his beauty of sentiment, than to punish him for his versatility of talent; for the envious are always more favourable to circumscribed talent.

Resolved to avenge himself of this injustice, and to compel the public to place him in his proper rank, he produced his SEMIRAMIS, ORESTES, and ROME PRESERVED, three subjects that Crebillon had previously written upon.

All the cabals united themselves against our author, to obtain an ephemeral success to the *Cataline* of his rival, the plot of which is absurd, and the style barbarous, Where Cicero proposes to employ his daughter to seduce Cataline; a grand-priest permits the lovers to take shelter in the temple, and introduces a courtezan in a male habit, who accuses the senate of impiety, because it there discusses the affairs of the republic. ROME PRESERVED, on the contrary, is a *chef d'œuvre* of style and reason. Cicero shines with all his dignity and eloquence. Cæsar speaks and acts as a man born to subdue Rome, to overwhelm his enemies with his glory, and to cover his tyranny by the strength of his talents and virtues. Cataline is here depicted as a villain, who endeavours to defend his vices by comparison, and his crimes by necessity. The republican energy and soul of the Romans is every where displayed.

Our author composed these dramas at Sceaux, the seat of the dutchess de Maine. She admired Cicero: but it was to revenge the outrages of Crebillon that he composed his ROME PRESERVED. He had sent Mahomet to the Pope: he dedicated SEMIRAMIS to a cardinal, and he took a mischievous delight, in showing to the fanatics the estimation his talents were held in by men of power.

At the pressing solicitations of the king of Prussia, he accepted the title of chamberlain, the grand cross of the order of merit, and a pension of 20,000 livres. He saw himself the object of envy and hatred among men of letters, in his own country, without having disputed for either place or emolument, and without having humbled them by the sword of criticism, which he was so well able to wield. The devout remembered his LETTRES PHILOSOPHIQUE, and sought to decry his works and his character. They accused him of impiety, to make him odious to the government. Madam Pompadour soon forgot her former connexion, when she discovered that Louis XV. had an aversion to him; and yet the same prince who disdained him, the same court, where he never was supported, felt offended at his departure. They saw more than the loss of a man who honoured France, and the evil of being compelled to seek an asylum elsewhere.

Voltaire arrived at Potsdam, in June 1750. He found, in the palace of Frederic, peace and liberty, without much other constraint, than that of attending a few hours with the king, to correct his works, and to aid him in the art of composition. He supped almost every night with his majesty. At these suppers the greatest freedom prevailed; questions of morality and metaphysics were treated with the greatest liberty of sentiment; gaiety and pleasantry succeeded more serious discussions; and the pomp of royalty was almost always thrown aside, to allow the man of sentiment to display his powers of intellect, which, doubtless, proved proved to all, "the feast of reason, and the flow of soul." The rest of the time was devoted to his own studies. Here he finished his SIÈCLE DE LOUIS XIV. corrected his PUCELLA, employed himself upon his ESSAY ON THE MANNERS AND SPIRIT OF NATIONS, and composed his poem of NATURAL LAW. The princesses admired his genius, and joined in his amusements: he wrote verses to them, and played a tragedy with the brothers and sisters of the king; and, in instructing them in elocution, he enabled them the more easily to appreciate the beauties of French poetry. His residence here he classically styled the palace of Alcina; but its enchantment was too sweet to last. The men of letters were jealous of a too marked preference, and particularly of the independence he had engrossed, which had been hitherto shared by the literati of Berlin: Maupertuis was their leader. Mischievous meddlers raised suspicions in the mind of the king; and, unluckily, some jokes had been passed by our author upon Frederic, which were much exaggerated to his majesty. He felt mortified; but he still wished

to retain Voltaire. He one day said to La Metrie, who had been hinting to him the jealousy excited among his old friends by the honours he heaped upon his chamberlain, "I want him at present to revise my works; but, having sucked the orange, we throw away the rhind." Voltaire, piqued on hearing such an illiberal expression, wished to provide for his escape from Prussia. He employed a Jew to convey away part of his property; but he betrayed his trust. This circumstance came to the knowledge of the king, who first laughed at it, and then added new marks of respect, by bestowing on him a house near Potsdam. He was thus obliged to endure, a while longer, the dissimulation of the king, and the envy of his parasites, till, irritated by the artifices and secret libels of his rival, Maupertuis, he published his satire of the DIATRIBE OF AKAKIA, which devoted that author to eternal ridicule. Frederic, though he disliked Maupertuis, laughed heartily at the satire, but caused it to be burnt by the hangman. Voltaire, highly offended, returned the king his cross, his key, and the brevet for his pension, with the following verses:

These honours I received with love,
I render them with grief again;
As he, whom jealous passions move,
Returns his mistress' gifts in pain.

His honours were returned to him, and he went to Potsdam, on purpose to see the king. A few moments were sufficient to revive their familiarity; and Voltaire, who was then much indisposed, obtained leave to depart, upon condition of returning on the restoration of his health.

After his arrival at Leipsic, he hastened to visit the dutchess of Saxe-Gotha, where, at her request, he commenced his ANNALS DE L'EMPIRE. After his departure for France, he was arrested at Frankfort, by order of Frederic, and detained a prisoner for some days, till he had sent back to Leipsic, for a manuscript of a collection of poetical lucubrations of the king, which he himself had presented to Voltaire.

Voltaire spent nearly two years in Alsatia, and published there his ANNALS DE L'EMPIRE, the most chronological abridgment which can be read without weariness, because it is replete with philosophical results, concise and energetic.

He thought of remaining in Alsatia, but finding himself surrounded by Jesuits, who appeared inclined to persecute, when they found they could not make a proselyte of him, he formed the design of returning to Paris. He could, however, procure from the court no assurance of protection from the persecutions of the clergy, in particular, which made him resolve

to go to Aix, in Savoy, for the purpose of drinking the waters. He received, on his journey, numerous marks of honour and respect, particularly from the inhabitants of Lyons, as an indemnification for the unpoliteness of the courtly cardinal de Tensin, who declined inviting him to dine with him, on account of his unpopularity with the government.

Voltaire did not, however, choose to reside in Lyons. He went on to Geneva, to consult the celebrated Tronchin, and at last fixed his abode at Fourney, afterwards Ferney, in France, and the Delices, at the gates of Geneva, that he might enjoy, as he pleased, shelter from the devotees and fanatics.

At Ferney he fixed his residence, and his niece, Mad. Denis, then a widow, without children, was appointed to manage his domestic concerns, to insure his tranquillity and comfort.

The calm sunshine of eventide now shed its genial influence upon the active and troubled life of this celebrated man. It was less brilliant, but more pleasing. While his time was divided between the society of his friends, and the pleasures of his favourite studies, his mind was free from the persecution of his enemies, and his writings, as well as his conduct, displayed sentiments of humanity, and an anxiety for the good of mankind. On all occasions, he relieved distress, afforded an asylum to the oppressed, and when any glaring act of despotism or infamy reached him, he raised his voice, and proclaimed it to all the world. It was thus he exposed the English minister who condemned to death the brave admiral Byng, who fell a sacrifice to cover the errors of the very man that condemned him.

The ORPHAN OF CHINA was the first work our author issued from his retreat, which finely pourtrays the triumph of virtue over power, and laws over arms. The repose of Voltaire, however, was very soon disturbed by the publication of his MAID OF ORLEANS, a work in which licentiousness and philosophy are combined, and in which truth assumes the mask of satirical and voluptuous humour. It had been begun 1730, and transcripts had fallen into the hands of his opponents, two of whom, la Baumelle and the ex-capuchin Maubert, for lucre, and for the sake of passing some of their own gross and paltry rhapsodies as the poetry of a great man, divided the *honour* of editing and publishing the PUCELLE, unsanctioned by the author. His enemies reproached, not only the play for its licentiousness, but added, that it was a stain upon the *other* works, and even the character, through life, of this eminent writer.

The poem on NATURAL LAW, and that on the DESTRUCTION OF LISBON, next appeared, the first of which was condemned as impious, by the Parliament of Paris, and burnt. "It is a work, though it excited the choler of hypocrites," says Condorcet, "in which the connexion between morality and the being of a God, is most clearly demonstrated." In the latter poem, he combats the opinion of the Optimists, as he afterwards did more amply and successfully in his philosophical romance of CANDIDE. This was succeeded by a free translation of ECCLESIASTES and the SONG OF SOLOMON, works written by the persuasion of Mad. Pompadour, to keep alive the king's esteem, by assuming the mask of religion. She hoped to make him one of the actors in this comedy. The duc de la Vallere also proposed his translating the *Psalms* and the *Proverbs;* but after the fate of his ECCLESIASTES and SONG OF SONGS, which were approved of by the liberal, condemned by the bigotted, and consigned to the flames by the hangman, he avenged himself by writing a SATIRICAL EPISTLE, which powerfully ridicules modern hypocrisy and fanaticism.

In 1757, the first edition of his works appeared, corrected by himself, accompanied by his immortal ESSAY ON THE MANNERS AND SPIRIT OF NATIONS.

The same year was the epoch of a reconciliation between our author and the king of Prussia, who, beset on all sides by his enemies, was threatened with ruin. Frederic employed his old preceptor confidentially as his agent in this affair, who, forgetting his treatment at Frankfort, gave way to the recollection of former friendship, but negociated in vain to effect a reconciliation.

During our author's residence in Prussia, he had beheld, with enthusiasm, the commencement of that grand national work, the ENCYCLOPEDIA, which originated with Diderot and d'Alembert; and, on his return to France, he took a warm interest in the undertaking, furnished several articles for it himself, and shrunk not from becoming the leader of the partisans of that work, when they became the objects of hatred and persecution. The Jesuits and the Jansenists, the clergy and the parliaments, all, without ceasing to hate each other, united against this great work; and it fell. The editors were forced to print it in secret, and, but for the courage of Diderot, it must have remained unfinished. The controversy it occasioned survived its prohibition; this rallied, under the standard of Voltaire, all the men of merit who patronized it, and enthusiasm took the stand of oppression. The Encyclo-

pedists were not only traduced in the journals of the day, but publicly ridiculed on the stage. Our author then interposed, and, in a number of satirical pieces, as the SCOTCHWOMAN, the POOR DEVIL, the RUSSIAN AT PARIS, &c. consigned to ridicule and utter contempt the impotence of his adversaries. Triumphing in the midst of these victims, sacrificed to his glory, he sent to the theatre his TANCRED, at sixty-six years of age.

During this year, he took under his protection the young niece of the great Corneille, then languishing in a state of indigence. "It is the duty of a soldier," said he, "to succour the niece of his general." She was taken to Ferney, and educated suitably to the rank her birth intended her for in society. He published, for her benefit, an edition of her uncle's works, with notes, in which he speaks of his faults with candour, but of his beauties with enthusiasm.

A new era now dawned upon France. Reason silently performed her operations; and the labours of philosophers and the learned brought their own reward. The destruction of the order of the Jesuits was one of the first and most beneficial effects of the labours of the friends of religious liberty. Our author, though educated in the bosom of that fraternity, looked with satisfaction on the wrecks of a society, which, like the inquisition, had enthralled the nation, and persecuted all the literati, of whom its influence could not make votaries: and when they, in their turn, became the objects of persecution, the sanctuary our author could have afforded them, was shut against them. There was, however, one exception, which he seemed to delight in exhibiting to his enemies, as a proof that his patronage was not measured by his partiality for any party: this was one father Adam, to whom he gave an asylum. He was a facetious, pleasant man, played at chess with his patron, assisted him in the more laborious parts of his literary pursuits, and gratified the vain-glory of the poet, by acting the part of his almoner.

To the clamours of fanaticism, our author could now oppose the protection of monarchs. The empress of Russia, the kings of Poland, Sweden, Denmark, and Prussia, interested themselves in his labours; and in every country of Europe, the powerful, and such ministers as were ambitious of fame, wished to enjoy the suffrage of the philosopher of Ferney.

In the year 1766, a circumstance occurred which astonished Europe, and particularly interested the feelings of our author: it serves, also, to exhibit the character of the old French regime, whose destruction, Burke, with all the aristo-

cratic of the English nation, has so piteously lamented. The wooden crucifix, placed on the bridge of Abbeville, had been insulted during the night. The penance of the bishop, the priests, and the people, were insufficient to atone for this sacrilegious act, which was committed, or rather suspected to have been committed, in a drunken frolic, by the chevalier de la Barre, and a friend of his, named d'Etallonde. The latter fled; but the chevalier, for the sake of his property, risked his person, and was accordingly brought to trial. At the age of seventeen years, he was condemned to be beheaded, after having had his tongue cut out, and suffering the torture! There was no direct proof against him: he was condemned on the testimony of prostitutes, who declared they had heard him sing irreligious and libidinous songs, and had prostrated himself before THE PHILOSOPHICAL DICTIONARY! The circumstances were unfolded to Europe by our author, in several publications; and the judges trembled on their very seats, at the terrible judgment they had passed. During twelve years that Voltaire survived this barbarous act of injustice, he never lost sight of the hope of obtaining reparation for it: but he had not the consolation of success.

Voltaire now saw the evening of his days approaching, and the priests again beginning to trouble his repose. The bishop of Annecy, within whose diocese his seat of Ferney lay, wrote to the count de St. Florentine, to banish the philosopher from his dominions. The court, however, did not think fit to comply, though instigated to it by the French clergy. At this time, our author, wearied by persecution, and wishing to silence his enemies, conceived the idea of solemnly receiving the sacrament! to be followed by a public declaration of his respect for the church!

The city of Geneva was immersed in troubles, which had been increasing from the year 1763. These disturbances determined our author to give up his House of Delights, and to reside constantly at the castle of Ferney, which he had entirely rebuilt, and ornamented with gardens, laid out with exquisite taste.

The quarrel at Geneva rose to such a degree, by the year 1770, that one party fired upon the other; several were killed, and a number of tradesmen, with their families, came and begged an asylum with Voltaire, which he immediately granted. Some of them he received into his castle, and, in a few years, had fifty houses of hewn stone built for the rest; so that the village of Ferney, which, at the time he purchased it, was only a wretched hamlet, tenanted by about fifty misera-

ble peasants, devoured by poverty, disease, and tax-gatherers, very soon became an agreeable place, inhabited by twelve hundred persons, all comfortably situated, and successfully employed for themselves and the state. The duc de Choiseul protected this infant colony to the utmost of his power, so that they were soon in a situation to carry on a considerable trade.

It is worthy of remark, that though this colony was composed of Roman Catholics and Protestants, it would have been impossible to discover there were two different religions at Ferney. The most familiar intercourse subsisted between them: when a Catholic was sick, the Protestants went to nurse him; and they met with the like assistance when they were in need of it. This was the effect of those principles of humanity which our author had recommended in all his works, but more particularly in his TREATISE ON TOLERATION. He always said, that mankind were brothers, and it was from facts alone that he reasoned.

In the year 1771 was one of the most trying epochs of our author's life, for the chancellor Maurepeau and the duc d'Aiguillon, both objects of hatred of the parliament, were designed as its victims; the one because he could not raise himself to the ministry, the other to preserve himself there without the disgrace of the duc de Choiseul. Voltaire hated the parliament of Paris, and found in the duc his old friend and benefactor. He defended him successfully; and his according with the chancellor, enabled him to render service to the unfortunate; for, if he was not successful in saving the life of la Barre, he was the means of preserving that of the wife of Montbailli. Her husband had perished on the wheel; she was condemned to death, but on declaring herself to be pregnant, procured a respite. Her trial, by our author's exertions, was revised; the council of Artois, by which she had been condemned, declared her innocent, as well as her unfortunate husband, who had perished; and they provided for the remaining days of the disconsolate woman, whose happiness they had thus destroyed.

We owe to Voltaire, the abolition of the feudal system, which then existed in many provinces, under Louis XV. This tyranny reigned over Franche Comte, and particularly the territory of St. Claude, in which the secular monks, in 1742, owed the greatest part of their lands, held in mortmain, to false tithes; and exercised their rights with a rigour which reduced an uninformed but industrious people to misery. It is needless to enumerate the evils of this barbarous system. These people suffered, without daring to complain, while they

beheld, with grief, the fruits of their labour become the prey of the monks, and suffered themselves all the horrors of starvation. They learned, at last, that, at the foot of Mount Jura, there existed a man, whose intrepid voice had, more than once, caused the very abodes of kings to resound with the injuries of the oppressed, and at whose name sacerdotal tyranny turned pale. To him they related their oppressions, and in him they found a protector; but all they obtained was, the liberty granted them, in 1778, of abandoning their homes and their native soil, to escape from the dominion of their tyrants.

After giving to the world some new tragedies, tales, and epistles, which are less correct, poetical, and uniformly animated, than his former productions, he published his PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY. He completed his ESSAY ON THE MANNERS AND SPIRIT OF NATIONS, and his AGE OF LOUIS XIV. to which he added THE AGE OF LOUIS XV. Between this and his visit to Paris, for the last time, Louis XV. died. During the reign of this monarch, philosophy had secretly diffused her influence, which reached even the court. A minister, M. Turgot, from whom his country predicted her future welfare, was placed at the helm of the state. Voltaire, his friend and admirer, rejoiced in his appointment. This seems to have inclined him to revisit his native country. He accordingly came to Paris, accompanied by his niece, and Mademoiselle de Varicour, whom M. de Vellette had lately espoused at Ferney. The respect and enthusiasm with which he was now greeted, formed a striking contrast to the treatment he had formerly received, and he had the satisfaction to behold all ranks in the state now paying the tribute due to his exalted genius; and the people, divested of their prejudices, hailing with acclamations his return. It was in the theatre that the consummation of his joy, and the honours paid to his labours, were completed. His tragedy of IRENE had, on his arrival, been presented on the stage; and its author was present at the third representation, when, after the applauses of the audience had ceased, his bust was publicly crowned with laurel upon the stage. The audience followed him even into his apartments, with the cries of, *Vive Voltaire! Vive Mahomet! Vive l'Henriade!* They threw themselves at his feet. Never did human being receive such affecting and sincere marks of homage.

The academy, which had not adopted him till the age of fifty-two, now lavished honours on him, rather as a sovereign in the empire of letters, than as an equal. Dr. Franklin was

then at Paris, accompanied by his grandson. It is superfluous to state the mutual inclination of the two philosophers for the acquaintance of each other. The American philosopher presented his grandson to Voltaire, with a request that he would give him his benediction. "GOD AND LIBERTY!" exclaimed our author: "it is the only benediction which can be given to the grandson of Franklin."——They went to an assembly of the Academy of Science, and embraced each other in the midst of public acclamation; and it was classically remarked, that Solon was embracing Sophocles.

About this time he induced the French academy to adopt a new system, with regard to the compilation of its Dictionary. Much of this labour depended upon his exertions; but a spitting of blood, caused by the efforts he had made during the representation of IRENE, had considerably reduced him. His natural animation concealed his real weakness. Incessant labour had excited irritation, which deprived him of sleep, and, as he had brought his plan to a crisis, he wished to procure a few hour's repose, to enable him to submit it to the academy, by whom some objections had been started. He resolved to take a small dose of opium, which, though his mind possessed all its usual strength, impetuosity, and gaiety, proved too powerful, and he sunk into that repose, which, with the exception of a few waking intervals, terminated a life of pleasure, sorrow, and glory! Voltaire expired on the 30th of May, 1778.

His arrival at Paris, and the acclamations with which he was received, redoubled the hatred of his enemies, wounded the pride of the leaders of the ecclesiastical hierarchy; but it also inspired some priests with the idea of building their fortune and reputation on the conversion of their illustrious enemy. Certainly they never flattered themselves, that the strength of their logic would convince him; but they imagined they might induce him to practice dissimulation; and this he thought beneficial to the interests of the friends of reason—that scenes of intolerance might not exceed his last moments.

The abbe Gauthier confessed Voltaire, and received from him a profession of faith, by which he declared he should die in the Catholic religion, in which he was born. When this circumstance became known, which offended enlightened men more than it edified the devotees, the curate of St. Sulpice ran to his parishioner, who received him with politeness, and gave him, according to usage, a handsome offering for his poor. But, mortified that the abbe had anticipated him, he pretended that he ought to have required a more particular profession of faith, and an express disavowal of all the heretical doctrines

which Voltaire had been accused of maintaining. The abbe declared, that, by requiring every thing, all would have been lost. During this dispute, our author recovered, IRENE was played, and the profession of faith was forgotten. But, at the moment of his relapse, the curate returned to Voltaire, absolutely resolved not to inter him, if he could not obtain the desired recantation.

This curate was one of those men, who are a mixture of hypocrisy and imbecility; he spoke with the obstinate persuasion of a maniac, and acted with the flexibility of a Jesuit. He wished to bring Voltaire at least to acknowledge the Divine nature of Jesus Christ, a dogma, to which he was more attached than to any other; and, for this purpose, he one day drew him from his lethargy, by shouting in his ear, "Do you believe the Divinity of Jesus Christ?"——"*In the name of God, sir,*" replied Voltaire, "*speak to me no more of that man! but let me die in peace!*"

The curate then declared he was obliged to refuse him burial; but he was not authorised in this refusal, for, according to the laws, it ought to have been preceded by excommunication, or a secular judgment; and even an appeal might have been made against this. Voltaire's family, by complaining to the parliament, would have obtained justice, but they feared the fanaticism of that body, and the hatred of its members to him, who had so often combatted its pretensions, and exerted his powers against its injustice. They did not perceive that the parliament could not, without disgrace to itself, depart from the principles on which it had acted in favour of the Jansenists; they did not know, that a great number of the young magistrates waited only for an occasion of effacing, by some splendid act, the reproach of fanaticism by which they were degraded; of dignifying themselves, by ordaining a mark of respect to the memory of a man of genius, whom they had been unfortunate enough to number among their enemies, and of showing that they chose rather to atone for their injustice, than to yield to any incitements of vengeance. The friends of Voltaire did not observe how much power they had acquired by the enthusiasm which his name had excited; an enthusiasm which had gained every class in the nation, and which no authority would venture openly to insult. They chose rather to negociate with government, who approved of a proposal which was made, of removing the body to the church of a monastery, of which his nephew was abbe. It was accordingly conducted to Scellieres, and the priests agreed not to interrupt the

execution of this design. However, two ladies, of distinguished rank, and very great devotees, wrote to the bishop of Troyes, to engage him, in quality of diocesan bishop, to oppose the burial; but, fortunately for the honour of the bishop, these letters arrived too late, and Voltaire was interred.

The French academy had observed a custom of saying mass for each of their deceased members, at the church of the Cordeliers; but it was prohibited on the present occasion, by Beaumont, archbishop of Paris; a man, notorious for his intolerance and obstinacy. The academy then resolved to suspend this custom, until the insult, offered to one of its members, should be redressed. What a contrast, with the bigotted conduct of this holy man, does that of a Protestant monarch (the great Frederic) exhibit! He ordained a solemn mass in the Catholic church of Berlin. The academy of Prussia were invited to attend; and, what was still more to the honour of Voltaire, Frederic, in the field, at the head of 150,000 men, where he defended the rights of the princes of the empire, and imposed limits on the Austrian power, wrote a eulogium on that illustrious man, of whom he had been the disciple and friend.

In fine, Voltaire may justly be considered, the most extraordinary man of his age; born with the soul of a poet, and the reason of a philosopher. M. Suard eloquently remarks, that if poetry had not been created before him, he would have created it. His philosophy, by all the liberal-minded, is venerated as a model, entirely free from bigotry and the errors of the schoolmen; and he may, also, be considered as the best defender of the rights and liberties of mankind.

All France had murmured at the fanaticism of refusing a tomb to that man, who had been its greatest ornament, during the eighteenth century; but it was punished by the loud voice of the nation. A decree of the National Assembly ordained his relics to be brought to the Hotel de Villette, Quai de Theatins, where he had died; and, on the 12th of July, 1792, his remains were removed to the Pantheon. Never was a funeral procession conducted with more majestic pomp. It commenced at three o'clock, and continued till six in the evening. The Quai des Theatins received, the same day, the name of the *Quai de Voltaire.* These honours had been for years confirmed, when the great patron of genius of the nineteenth century, by an imperial decree, in the year 1806, ordained, that a statue in marble should be erected to his memory in the

Pantheon, executed by one of the most celebrated sculptors. Frederic the Great, judiciously said, that "His own works are his greatest monument. They will last longer than the dome of St. Peter's, the Louvre, and all those buildings which vanity has consecrated to eternity: and, when the French language shall cease to be spoken, Voltaire will be translated into that which shall next succeed it."

As this simple relation can scarcely be supposed to give more than an abridged account of the life, and influence of the writings, of Voltaire, we shall subjoin the following brief remarks. The principal features of his mind, were benevolence, indulgence for human foibles, and a hatred of injustice and oppression. He may be numbered among the very few, in whom the love of humanity was a real passion, which, the noblest of all, was known only to modern times, and took its rise from the progress of knowledge. Its very existence is sufficient to confound the blind partisans of antiquity, and those who calumniate philosophy. But his happy qualities were often perverted, by that natural restlessness, which the writing of tragedy had but increased. In an instant he would change from anger to affection, from indignation to a jest. Born with violent passions, they often hurried him too far; and his restlessness deprived him of the advantages which usually accompany such minds; particularly of that fortitude to which fear is no obstacle, when action becomes a duty, and which is not shaken by the presence of foreseen danger. Often would he expose himself to the storm with rashness, but rarely did he brave it with constancy; and these intervals of temerity and weakness have frequently afflicted his friends.

His affections were permanent, and his friendship for Genonville, the president de Maisons, Formont, Cideville, the marchioness du Chatelet, d'Argental, and d'Alembert, seldom obscured by passing clouds, ended only with his life. From his works, we discover, that even few men of feeling have so long preserved the remembrance of friends lost in early youth.

He has been censured for his envy, jealousy, and attacks upon his contemporaries. Of the two first, an answer to the interrogative line from his TANCRED, will suffice: "*De qui dans l'univers peut-il etre jalouse?*"—Is there, in the universe, one of whom he might be jealous?——Of the last, no one, who candidly considers his life, and the bigotry and superstition that existed, will think an apology either necessary or difficult. There were not wanting, in that age, writers who

execution of this design. However, two ' with contempt, guished rank, and very great devotees, His attacks of Troyes, to engage him, in quality s of a mind, which to oppose the burial; but, fortunately tinually brandished bishop, these letters arrived too late, terred. nall find, that, of the

The French academy had obs he ode and comedy mass for each of their deceased not deserve the highest Cordeliers; but it was prohibite Beaumont, archbishop of Pari st who shook off the tram- tolerance and obstinacy. Th chnical and abstruse learning pend this custom, until the ractical results to the cause of bers, should be redressed.

conduct of this holy man orded a useful example to his fel- (the great Frederic) ex efforts in embracing liberty, oppos- the Catholic church of of every description, and defending invited to attend; a useful truth.

Voltaire, Frederic nes, he has been accused of having de- where he defende misrepresentation, the religion of his coun- imposed limits g incredulity even to atheism. To this that illustrious e constantly appeared persuaded of the ex- friend. reme Being; but, while he thought he beheld

In fine, V er of nature, he could not but perceive those ordinary m alies, which mankind are unable to explain. the reason ion did not amount to that absolute certainty, in that if po ce of which all difficulties vanish; but his work, created *Il faut prendre un parti; ou, le principe d'action*—— rated ve must; or, the principle of action——contains per- the s e strongest proofs of the existence of a Supreme Be- defe hich men have yet been able to collect.

f free-will, he believed that man has the power to resist t lination, and to weigh the motives of action. His uncer- ainty respecting spirit was almost absolute, and even concern- ng the existence of the soul after the decease of the body; but, as he imagined this opinion, as well as that of the exis- tence of a God, was beneficial, he rarely allowed himself to mention his doubts, and generally dwelt rather on the proofs, than on the objections.

Such was the philosophy of Voltaire; and let it be remembered, that, though acrimony tinges some of his polemical writings, which was frequently caused by temporary irritation, his predominant passion was active benevolence; his philanthrophy exceeded his hatred of his enemies. Even his passion for fame was obscured by his love of humanity. Few

ever existed, whose lives have been honoured by more
uous worth.

nclude, it ought not to be forgotten, that Voltaire,
height of his glory, and while, throughout Europe,
a power over the minds of men, hitherto unpa-
ssive words, " *J'ai fait un peu de bien, c'est*
ce !"——The little good I have done, is my
—was the unaffected sentiment that held
is soul.

THE

PHILOSOPHICAL

DICTIONARY.

ABRAHAM

Is a name famous in Asia Minor and Arabia, like Thaut among the Egyptians, the first Zoroaster in Persia, Hercules in Greece, Orpheus in Thracia, Odin among the northern nations, and many others known rather by their celebrity than by any authentic history. Here I speak only of profane history; for as to that of the Jews, our teachers and our enemies, whom we believe and detest at the same time, the history of this people having manifestly been written by the Holy Ghost, we have for it all the sentiments we ought. We here address ourselves only to the Arabs, who boast of being descended from Abraham by Ishmael, and believe that this patriarch built Mecca, and that he died in this city. The truth is, that Ishmael's progeny has been favoured by God infinitely more than that of Jacob. Both races, indeed, have produced robbers, but the Arabian robbers have prodigiously surpassed the Jewish. Jacob's descendants conquered only a very small country, and that they afterwards lost; whereas the descendants of Ishmael have extended their conquests over a part of Europe, Asia, and Africa; have founded an empire greater than the Roman, and have driven the Jews

from those holes of theirs, which they called the Land of Promise.

To judge of things only by the instances of modern histories, it is not likely that Abraham should have been the father of two nations so very different; we are told that he was born in Chaldea, the son of a poor potter, who subsisted by making little earthen idols. Now, how should this potter's son go and found Mecca, at the distance of three hundred leagues, and over impracticable deserts? If he were a conqueror, he certainly would have bent his arms against the fine country of Assyria; and, if only a poor man, as represented to us, he could hardly have founded kingdoms in foreign parts —his only monarchy must have been his home.

Genesis makes him seventy-five years of age, when he left the country of Haran, after the death of his father, Terah, the potter. But the same book says, that Terah, having begotten Abraham in his seventieth year, lived to the age of two hundred and five years, and that Abraham did not leave Haran till after his father's decease; thus, from Genesis itself, it is clear, that Abraham, when he left Mesopotamia, was a hundred and thirty-five years of age; and he only went from one idolatrous country to another, called Sichem, in Palestine. And wherefore did he go thither? Why leave Euphrates' fertile banks for so rocky, so barren a country as that of Sichem, and withal so remote? The Chaldean tongue must have been very different from that of Sichem; neither was it a trading place. Sichem is above a hundred leagues from Chaldea, and with many deserts to pass through; but God ordered him on this journey, intending to show him the country which his issue were to possess many centuries after him. The reasons of such a journey are what the human mind can never conceive.

No sooner has he reached the little rocky country of Sichem, than a famine obliges him as hastily to decamp, and he goes away to Egypt in quest of a subsistence. Memphis lies two hundred leagues from Sichem; now is it natural to go for corn so very far, and where one knows nothing of the tongue? These are odd peregrinations for a man nearly a hundred and forty years old!

With him, he brings to Memphis his wife, Sarah, who, in age, was little more than a child to him, being only in her sixty-fifth year. As she had a great share of beauty, he was for turning it to account: "Make as if you were only my sister," said he to her: "that I may have kindness shown to me for your sake." He rather should have said to her, "Make as if you were my daughter."—The king became smitten with

young Sarah, and gave her sham brother abundance of sheep, oxen, he-asses, she-asses, camels, and man-servants and maid-servants; a proof that Egypt, even then, was a very powerful and well policied, and consequently a very ancient kingdom; and that brothers, coming to make a tender of their sisters to the kings of Memphis, were magnificently rewarded.

Young Sarah had, according to Scripture, reached her ninetieth year, when God promised her, that Abraham then full a hundred and sixty, should get her with child within the twelvemonth!

Abraham, being fond of travelling, went into the frightful wilderness of Kadesh, with his pregnant wife, who, it seems, was still so young and pretty, as to kindle in a king of this wilderness the like passion, which the Egyptian monarch had felt for her. The father of the faithful here enjoined her the same lie as in Egypt: and thus his wife, passing for his sister, got more cattle and servants; so that Sarah turned out no inconsiderable fortune to him. Commentators having written a prodigious number of volumes to justify Abraham's conduct, and reconcile the chronology, to those commentaries we must refer the reader. They are all the works of men of great parts and sagacity, consummate metaphysicians, void of all prepossession, and the farthest in the world from any thing of pedantry.

ANGEL,

In Greek, a *Messenger*. It matters little to be informed, that the Persians had their Peries, the Hebrews their Malacs, and the Greeks their Demonoi.

But what may, perhaps, be more interesting to know, is, that the supposition of intermediate beings between the Deity and us, prevailed among the first men: these are the demons and genii feigned by antiquity: man has always made the gods in his own likeness. As princes were seen to signify their orders by messengers, the Deity, of course, also despatches couriers. Mercury and Iris were celestial couriers and messengers.

The Hebrews, that chosen people, under the immediate guidance of the Deity itself, at first gave no names to the angels, whom God, after some time, was pleased to send to them; but, during their captivity in Babylon, they borrowed the names used by the Chaldeans. The first word we hear of Michael and Gabriel is in Daniel, then a slave among those people. Tobias, a Jew, who lived at Nineveh, knew

the angel Raphael, who took a journey with his son, to help him in getting a sum of money due to him by Gabel, likewise a Jew.

In the Jewish laws, (in Leviticus and Deuteronomy,) not the least mention is made of the existence of angels, much less of worshipping them; accordingly the Sadducees believed no such thing; but, in the histories of the Jews, they frequently occur. These angels were corporeal and with wings at their back, as the Mercury of the Pagans had at his heels. Sometimes they concealed their wings under their apparel. Bodies they surely had, for they ate and drank; and the inhabitants of Sodom were for abusing the angels who had come on a visit to Lot.

The ancient Jewish tradition, according to Ben Maimon, makes ten degrees or orders of angels: 1, the *Chaios Acodesh*, pure, holy; 2, the *Osimins*, rapid; 3, the *Oralim*, strong; 4, the *Chasmalim*, flames; 5, the *Seraphim*, sparks; 6, the *Malachim*, angels, messengers, deputies; 7, the *Eloim*, gods, or judges; 8, the *Ben Eloim*, children of the gods; 9, the *Cherubim*, images; 10, the *Ychim*, animated.

The history of the fall of the angels is not to be met with in the books of Moses; the first word of it is in the prophet Isaiah, who, in a divine rapture, calls out to the king of Babylon, "What is become of the exacter of tributes? the fir trees and cedars rejoice at thy overthrow. How art thou fallen, from heaven, O Helel, thou morning star!" This *Helel* has been rendered by the Latin word *Lucifer*; the appellation of *Lucifer* has afterwards been allegorically transferred to the prince of the angels who dared to make war in heaven; and lastly, *this* name, originally signifying phosphorus, and the dawn of day, is come to denote the devil!

The Christian religion is founded on the fall of the angels. The rebels were tumbled down from the spheres of bliss into hell, in the centre of the earth, and became devils. A devil tempted Eve under the figure of a serpent, and brought damnation upon mankind, till Jesus came to deliver them, triumphing over the devil, who, however, still tempts us. Yet is this fundamental tradition to be found only in the apocryphal book of Noah, and there quite differently from the received traditions.

St Austin, in his 109th letter, expressly attributes ethereal, or very thin bodies, both to good and bad angels. Pope Gregory II. has reduced the ten degrees of Jewish angels to nine choirs, to nine hierarchies or orders. These are the Seraphim, the Cherubim, Thrones, Dominions, Virtues, Pow-

ers, Principalities, Archangels, and lastly, the Angels, from whom the other eight hierarchies receive their appellation.

The Jews had in the temple two cherubims, each with two heads, one of an ox, the other of an eagle, with six wings; but, for some time past, they have been painted as a flying head, with two little wings under the ears, as angels and archangels are under the figure of young persons, with two wings at their back. As to the thrones and dominions, the pencil has not yet presumed to meddle with them.

St. Thomas (question 118, article 2.) says, that the thrones are as near God, as the cherubim and seraphim, because it is on them that God sits. Scotus has computed the angels to amount to a thousand millions. The ancient mythology of good and bad genii, having spread itself into Greece, and so on to Rome, has there been sanctified, and to every man has been assigned a good and an evil angel; one assisting him and the other annoying him, from his cradle to his coffin: but, whether these good and evil angels continually shift stations from one to another, or whether they are relieved by others of their order is not yet known. Hereupon St. Thomas's Summary of Divinity may be consulted.

Neither is it exactly known where the angels keep themselves; whether in the air, the void, or the planets: this God has thought fit to conceal from us.

ANTHROPOPHAGI, OR MAN-EATERS.

That there have been Anthropophagi, or man-eaters, is but too true. Such were found in America, and there may be some still; and, in ancient time, it was not the Cyclops alone who sometimes fed upon human flesh. Juvenal relates, that among the Egyptians, (that people so famous for their laws, so wise, and so very devout as to worship crocodiles and onions,) the Tintirites ate one of their enemies who had fallen into their hands. And this is not a tale on hearsay: this inhuman act was committed almost under his eyes, he being then in Egypt, and but a little way from Tintira. He further quotes the Gascons and the Sagontines, who used to eat their countrymen.

In 1725, four Mississipi savages were brought to Fontainbleau, where I had the honour of conversing with them. One being a lady of the country, I took the liberty to ask her, whether she had ever eaten men; to which, with an unconcerned frankness, she answered in the affirmative. On my

appearing somewhat shocked, she excused herself, saying, that it was better, after killing an enemy, to eat him, than to leave him to be devoured by beasts; and that conquerors deserved the preference. We, in pitched battles, or encounters, kill our neighbours, and for a very scanty hire, prepare a most plentiful meal for ravens and worms. Herein it is that lies the horror; here is the guilt: what signifies it to a dead man being eaten by a soldier, a crow, or a dog?

We show a greater respect to the dead than the living; but both claim our regard. The polished nations, as they are called, were in the right not to spit their enemies, as from eating neighbours they would soon come to eat their countrymen, by which the social virtues would be reduced to a low ebb. But the polished nations, far from having been always so, were, for a long time, wild and savage, and amidst the multitude of revolutions in this globe, the human race has been sometimes very numerous, and sometimes very thin. The present case of the elephants, lions, and tigers, whose species are very much decreased, has been that of man. In times when a country was bare of inhabitants, they lived chiefly by hunting; scarcely any other arts or trades were known among them; and the custom of feeding on what they had killed, almost naturally led them to treat their enemies like their deer and boars. The sacrifice of human victims was the effect of superstition, the eating them was owing to necessity.

Which is the greater crime, to hold a solemn assembly, in order to plunge a knife, by way of honouring the Deity, into the heart of a beautiful girl, adorned with fillets and ribbons; or to pick the bones of an ugly fellow, whom we have killed in our own defence?

Yet we have more instances of sacrificing girls and boys, than of eating them. There is scarcely a known nation where such sacrifices have not obtained. Among the Jews it was called the Anathema. This was a real sacrifice, and the 27th chapter of Leviticus enjoins not to spare the souls which have been devoted; but in no place are they ordered to eat them: they are only threatened with it; and Moses, as we have seen, says to the Jews, that, if they fail in observing his ceremonies, they shall not only be plagued with the itch, but that mothers shall eat their children.—In Ezekiel's time, indeed, the eating of human flesh must have been common among the Jews, as he foretells them in chap. xxxix. that God will give them not only to eat the horses of their enemies, but even the riders and the other great warriors. This is clear and positive; and, indeed, why might not the Jews have been

man-eaters, since this only was wanting to render the chosen people of God the most abominable people upon earth?

I have read in the anecdotes of the history of England, in Cromwell's time, of a woman who kept a tallow-chandler's shop in Dublin, whose candles were remarkably good, and made of the fat of Englishmen. Some time after, one of her customers complaining, that her candles were not so good as usual, "Why," said she, "for this month past I have had few or no Englishmen." I would fain know who was most guilty, they who murdered the English, or this woman who made such good candles of their tallow?

APIS.

Was it as a god, as a symbol, or as an ox, that Apis was worshipped, at Memphis? I am inclined to think that it was as a god by the fanatics, and only as a mere symbol by the wise, whilst the stupid people worshipped the ox. Was it well of Cambyses, when he had conquered Egypt, to kill this ox with his own hands? Why not? He gave the weak to see, that their god might be roasted, and nature not stir a finger to revenge such a sacrilege. The Egyptians have been greatly cried up, but, for my part, I scarcely know a more contemptible people. There must ever have been, both in their temper and government, some radical vice, by which they have been kept in a perpetual servitude. I allow that, in those times of which we have scarcely any knowledge, they over-ran the earth, but, since the historical ages, they have been subdued by all who thought it worth their while; by the Assyrians, the Persians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Arabians, the Mamelucs, the Turks; in short, by every body except our Croises, these being more imprudent than the Egyptians were cowardly. It was the corps of Mamelucs which defeated the French. Perhaps there are but two tolerable things in this nation: the first, a freedom of conscience, they who worshipped an ox never compelling those who worshipped a monkey to change their religion; the second, the hatching of chickens in ovens.

We have many pompous accounts of their pyramids; but these very pyramids are monuments of their slavery, for the whole nation must have been made to work on them, otherwise such unwieldly masses could never have been finished. And what is the use of them? why, forsooth, in a little room within them is kept the mummy of some prince or governor, which his soul is at the term of a thousand years, to re-ani-

mate. But, if they expected this resurrection of the bodies, why take out the brain before embalming them? Were the Egyptians to rise again without brains?

THE APOCALYPSE.

JUSTIN MARTYR, who wrote in the year 170 of our era, is the first who mentions the Apocalypse, attributing it, in his Dialogue with Tryphon, to the apostle John, the Evangelist. This Jew asks him, whether he does not believe that Jerusalem is one day to be restored in all its former splendor? Justin answers him, that it is the belief of all Christians who have a right way of thinking. "There was," says he, "among us a respectable person, named John, one of Jesus's twelve apostles; he has foretold that the faithful shall dwell a thousand years in Jerusalem."

The thousand years' reign went current a long time among the Christians, and this period was in great repute among the Gentiles. At the end of a thousand years, the souls of the Egyptians returned into their bodies: the souls in Virgil's purgatory underwent a purification for the same space of time, *et mille per annos.* The millenarian New Jerusalem was to have twelve gates, in remembrance of the twelve apostles, the form square, the length, breadth, and height, twelve thousand stades, that is, five hundred leagues; so that the houses must have been five hundred leagues high; this could not but make it, to those living in the upper stories, somewhat troublesome; but, however, this is what the Apocalypse says, chap. xxi.

Though Justin be the first who attributes the Apocalypse to St. John, some persons disallow his testimony, seeing, in the same Dialogue with the Jew, Tryphon, he says, that according to the apostle's narrative, at Jesus Christ's going down into Jordan, the waters of that river boiled, and were all in a flame; yet not a jot of this is to be found in the apostolic writings.

The same St. Justin confidently cites the oracles of the Sybils, and further pretends to have seen the remains of the little houses in the Pharos of Egypt, where the seventy-two interpreters were shut up in Herod's time. For such an assertion, the author seems to have been himself a proper subject for confinement.

St. Ireneus, next in succession, and who also held the millenium, says, that he was informed by an old man, that St. John composed the Apocalypse; but it has been objected to

St. Ireneus, that he has written, there can be but four Gospels, as there are but four parts of the world, and four cardinal winds, and that Ezekiel saw only four beasts. This reasoning he calls "a demonstration;" and it must be owned, that Ireneus's demonstrating carries as much weight as Justin's seeing.

Clement of Alexandria, in his *Electa*, mentions only an Apocalypse of St. Peter's, which was highly respected. Tertullian, a warm stickler for the millenium, not only affirms that St. John has predicted this resurrection, and reign in the city of Jerusalem, but that this Jerusalem was then forming in the air; that all the Christians in Palestine, and the very Pagans had seen it forty nights successively: but, unluckily, this city disappeared at day-light.

Origen, in his preface to St. John's Gospel, quotes the oracles of the Apocalypse, but he likewise quotes the oracles of the Sybils; yet St. Dionysius of Alexandria, who wrote about the middle of the third century, says, in one of his fragments, preserved by Eusebius, that almost all the doctors rejected the Apocalypse, as a senseless book; that, instead of being written by St. John, the author of it was one Cerinthus, who borrowed a respectable name, to give the greater weight to his chimeras.

The council of Laodicea, held in 360, did not admit the Apocalypse among the canonical books; and it was somewhat odd, that Laodicea, a church to which the Apocalypse was directed, should reject a treasure particularly appointed for it; and even the bishop of Ephesus, a member of the council, should also reject the book of St. John, though buried in his metropolis.

It was visible to all, that St. John kept stirring in his grave, the earth continually heaving and falling; yet the same persons, who were sure that St. John was not actually dead, were also sure that he did not write the Apocalypse. But the Millenarians tenaciously persisted in their opinions. Sulpicius Severus, in his Sacred History, book ix. calls those who did not hold the Apocalypse, "mad and impious." At length, after many doubts and controversies, and council clashing with council, Sulpicius's opinion prevailed; and the point having undergone a thorough discussion, the church (from whose judgment there lies no appeal) has decided the Apocalypse to have been indisputably written by St. John.

Every Christian sect has attributed to itself the prophecies contained in this book. The English have found in it the revolutions of Great Britain; the Lutherans, the disturbances

in Germany; the French Reformed, the reign of Charles IX., and the regency of Catherine de Medicis; and they are all equally in the right! Bossuet and Newton have both commented on the Apocalypse; but, after all, the eloquent declamations of the former, and the sublime discoveries of the latter, have done them much greater honour than their comments.

ATHEIST—ATHEISM.

Formerly, he, who was possessed of any secret in an art, ran great risk of being looked upon as a sorcerer. Every new sect was accused of murdering infants in the celebration of its mysteries; and every philosopher, who departed from the jargon of schools, fanatics and cheats never failed to charge with atheism; and ignorant and weak judges so surely passed sentence on them.

Anaxagoras took upon him to affirm, that the sun is not guided by Apollo, sitting in a car drawn by four mettlesome steeds; on this he is exclaimed against as an atheist, and obliged to fly his country.

Aristotle, being accused of atheism, by a priest, and not being able to procure justice against his accuser, withdraws to Chalcis. But, in all the history of Greece, there is not a more heinous transaction than the death of Socrates.

Aristophanes (whom commentators admire because he was a Greek, not considering that Socrates was also a Greek,) was the first who brought the Athenians to account Socrates an atheist.

This comic poet, who is neither *comic* nor a *poet*, would not have been allowed, among us, to have exhibited farces at St. Lawrence's fair. To me, he seems more contemptible, more low-lived, and scurrilous than Plutarch makes him, who speaks of him in this manner: "Aristophanes' language is, indeed, that of a wretched quack, full of the lowest and most disagreeable points and quirks; he cannot raise a laugh among the very vulgar, and, to persons of judgment and honour, he is quite insupportable; his arrogance is beyond all bearing, and all good people detest his malignity."

So this, by the bye, is the buffoon whom Madam Dacier, amidst all her admiration of Socrates, can find in her heart to admire. This is the man who remotely prepared the poison by which infamous judges put an end to the existence of the most virtuous man then living in Greece.

The tanners, the shoemakers, and sempstresses of Athens were hugely diverted with a farce, where Socrates, being hauled up into the air in a basket, proclaims that there is no God; and makes his boast, that he had stolen a cloak while he was teaching philosophy. Such a people, and whose bad government could countenance such scandalous licentiousness, well deserved what has happened to them, to be brought under subjection to the Romans, and to be, at present, slaves to the Turks.

We shall pass over the common space of time between the Roman commonwealth and our days, observing only, that the Romans, who were much wiser than the Greeks, never molested any philosopher for his opinion. It was not so among the barbarous nations who seated themselves in the Roman empire. The emperor Frederick II., having some difference with the popes, was immediately arraigned of atheism, and reported to have been, jointly with his chancellor de Vineis, the author of the book, entitled, "*The Three Impostors.*"

Our CHANCELLOR DE L'HOPITAL, that excellent man, was branded as an atheist, because he opposed persecutions—*Homo doctus sed verus atheos:* "a learned man, but a real atheist." A Jesuit, Garasse, as much below Aristophanes, as the latter was below Homer; a wretch, whose name is become ridiculous among the very fanatics, makes every body atheists, at least this is the appellation he gives to all who have incurred his displeasure. With him, Theodore de Beza is an atheist; and he it is who led people into an error concerning Vanini.

Vanini's wretched end raises no indignation or pity, like that of Socrates. This Italian was only an insignificant pedant; yet was he no atheist, for which he suffered, but as far from it as man could be.

He was a poor Neapolitan churchman, a kind of preacher and professor of divinity, a vehement disputer in quiddities and universals; "*et utrum chimera bombinans in vacuo possit comedere secundas intentiones.*" There was nothing in him which looked towards atheism; and his ideas of God are perfectly agreeable to the most sound and approved theology. "God is his beginning and end, the father of both, in no need of either; eternal without existing in time; every where present, without being in any place. To him, there is neither past nor future, space nor time; the Creator and Governor of all things; immutable, infinite without parts; his power is his will," &c.

Vanini was for reviving the fine thought of Plato, espoused

by Averroes, that God had created a chain of beings from the most minute to the largest, and the last link of which is fastened to his eternal throne; a notion which, though it has more of sublimity than truth in it, is as far from atheism, as something is from nothing.

He travelled to dispute and make his fortune, but, unluckily, disputing is the very opposite road to fortune, every person against whom one enters the list, being thus made a rancorous and irreconcilable enemy. Hence Vanini's misfortunes; his heat and rudeness in disputing brought on him the hatred of some divines; and, having a quarrel with one Francon, or Franconi, this man being connected with his enemies, charged him with being an atheist, and teaching atheism.

This Francon, or Franconi, supported by some witnesses, had the barbarity, when confronted with Vanini, to maintain, with aggravations, the whole of what he had advanced; whereas Vanini, being interrogated, as to what he thought of the existence of God, made answer, that, agreeably to the church, he worshipped one God in three persons, and, taking up a straw, which lay on the ground, "*This*," says he, "*sufficiently proves that there is a Creator:*" then made a very fine speech on vegetation and motion, and the necessity of a Supreme Being, without whom there could be neither motion nor vegetation.

The President, Gramont, gives us an account of this speech, in his History of France, now scarcely known; and this historian, from an inconceivable prepossession, will have it, that Vanini spoke only out of "vanity or fear, and not from a sincere persuasion."

What grounds could the president, Gramont, have for such a rash and sanguinary judgment? It is manifest, that, on Vanini's answer, he ought to have been cleared of the charge of atheism. But what was the issue? This unhappy foreign priest dabbled likewise in physic; a large living toad, which he kept in a vessel of water, being found in his house, was made use of to charge him with sorcery, and the toad was said to be the only deity he worshipped. Several passages of his books were wrested to an impious meaning, than which, nothing is more easy and more common; taking the objections for answers, putting a malicious construction on every ambiguous phrase, and misrepresenting innocent expressions. At length his enemies extorted from the judges a capital sentence against him.

This death could not be justified, without accusing this unfortunate creature of most horrid crimes; and one Mersenne,

a Minim, a name quite suitable to his character, has been so mad as to affirm in print, that Vanini set out from Naples, with twelve of his apostles, to go and convert all nations to atheism. What incongruity! How could a poor priest have twelve men in his pay? How could he have prevailed with twelve Neapolitans to undertake an expensive journey, and at the hazard of their lives, for the sake of disseminating this abominable doctrine? How could a king hire twelve preachers of atheism? This is such an absurdity as never came into any one's mind, but father Mersenne's. But from him the tale has been repeated over and over; the journals and historical dictionaries have been stained and sullied with it; and the public, *who are fond of extraordinary things*, have greedily swallowed it.

Bayle himself, in his Miscellaneous Thoughts, speaks of Vanini as an atheist, making use of him in support of his paradox, "that a society of atheists can subsist." He affirms, that Vanini was a man of very regular morals, and died a martyr to his philosophical opinions. Now in both is he mistaken. Vanini, though a priest, in his Dialogue written in imitation of Erasmus, does not hide from us that he had a mistress, named Isabella. He was both a free liver and a free writer: but he was no atheist.

A century after his death, the learned La Croze, and another under the name of Philalethes, wrote a vindication of him; but the memory of a poor Neapolitan being what few gave themselves any concern about, these ingenious persons might have saved themselves that trouble.

The Jesuit Hardouin, with all Garasse's rashness, but much more learning, in his *Athei Delecti*, accuses the Descartes, the Arnauls, the Paschals, the Nicholas, the Malbranches, of atheism; but it was their good fortune to come to a better end than poor Vanini.

From all these facts, I now proceed to Bayle's moral question, "Whether a society of atheists could subsist?" And here let us previously observe the enormous contradiction of men in disputes; they who most furiously inveighed against Bayle's opinion; they, who have, with the greatest rancour, denied the possibility of a society of atheists, have since as confidently maintained, that atheism is the established religion in China!

They are certainly very little acquainted with China; for had they only read an edict of the emperors of that vast country, they would have seen that those edicts are like sermons, frequently making mention of the Supreme Being, as governing, punishing, and rewarding.

At the same time, they are not less mistaken concerning the impossibility of a society of atheists; and I wonder how Mr. Bayle came to overlook a striking example, which would have given a decisive victory to his cause.

Why is a society of atheists thought impossible? because it is thought that men under no restraint could never live together; that laws avail nothing against secret crimes; and that there must be a wisely-avenging God, punishing in this world or in the next, those delinquents who escape human justice.

Though Moses' law did not reach a life to come, did not threaten any punishments after death, and did not give the primitive Jews the least insight into the immortality of the soul; still the Jews, so far from being atheists, so far from denying a divine vengeance against wickedness, were the most religious men upon the face of the earth. They not only believed the existence of an eternal God, but they believed him to be ever present among them; they dreaded being punished in themselves, in their wives, in their children, in their posterity, to the fourth generation; and this was a very powerful restraint.

But, among the Gentiles, several sects had no curb; the Sceptics doubted of every thing; the Academics suspended their judgment concerning every thing; the Epicureans held that the Deity could not concern himself about human affairs, and, in reality, they did not allow of any Deity; they were persuaded that the soul is not a substance, but a faculty born and perishing with the body; consequently their only check was morality and honour. The Roman senators and knights were downright atheists; as neither to fear nor expect any thing from the gods, amounts to a denial of their existence: so that the Roman senate, in Cæsar's and Cicero's time, was in fact an assembly of atheists.

That great orator, in his speech for Cluentius, boldly argues in a full senate—"What hurt can death do to him? All the idle tales about hell, none of us give the least credit to: then what can death deprive him of? Nothing but the feeling of pain."

Does not Cæsar, Cataline's friend, in order to save that wretch from an indictment, brought against him by the same Cicero, object, that putting a criminal to death is not punishing him; that death is nothing; that it is only the end of our sufferings; that it is rather a happy than a fatal moment? And did not Cicero and the whole senate yield to these arguments? So that the conquerors and legislators of the known universe were evidently a society of men without any fear of God; and thus were real atheists.

Bayle afterwards examines whether idolatry be more dangerous than atheism; whether the disbelief of a Deity be more criminal than the having unworthy opinions of him; and herein he is of Plutarch's mind, thinking a disbelief preferable to an ill opinion. But, with submission to Plutarch, nothing can be more evident than that it was infinitely better for the Greeks to stand in awe of Ceres, Neptune, and Jupiter, than to be under no manner of restraint. The sacredness of oaths is manifest and necessary; and they who hold that perjury will be punished, are certainly more to be trusted than they who think that a false oath will be attended with no ill consequence. It is beyond question, that, in a civilized state, even a bad religion is better than none at all.

Bayle, therefore, should have examined which is the more dangerous, fanaticism or atheism? Now, fanaticism is certainly a thousand times more mischievous; for atheism stimulates to none of those sanguinary procedures for which fanaticism is notorious. If atheism do not suppress crimes, fanaticism incites to the commission of them. Allowing the author of *Commentarium Rerum Gallicarum*, that the Chancellor de l'Hôpital was an atheist, still the laws he made are wise and good, and all his counsels tended to moderation and concord. The fanatics committed the massacre of St. Bartholomew, Hobbes was accounted an atheist, yet he led a quiet, harmless life, whilst the fanatics were deluging England, Scotland, and Ireland with blood. Spinosa was not only an atheist, but taught atheism; yet who can say he had any hand in the juridical murder of Barneweldt? It was not he who tore the two De Witts to pieces, and broiled and ate their flesh.

Atheists, for the most part, are men of study, but bold and erroneous in their reasonings; and, not comprehending the creation, the origin of evil, and other difficulties, have recourse to the hypothesis of the eternity of things and of necessity.

The sensualist and the ambitious have little time for speculation, or to embrace a bad system: to compare Lucretius with Socrates, is quite out of their way. Such is the present state of things among us.

It was otherwise with the senate of Rome, which almost totally consisted of atheists, both in theory and in practice, believing neither in Providence nor a future state. It was a meeting of philosophers, of votaries to pleasure and ambition: all very dangerous sets of men, and who, accordingly, overturned the republic.

I would not willingly lie at the mercy of an atheistical

prince, who might think it his interest to have me pounded in a mortar; for I am very certain, that would be my fate. And were I a sovereign, I would not have about me any atheistical courtiers, whose interest it might be to poison me, as then I must every day be taking alexipharmics; so necessary is it, both for princes and people, that their minds be thorougly imbibed with an idea of a Supreme Being, the Creator, Avenger, and Rewarder.

There are atheistical nations, says Bayle, in his *Thoughts on Comets.* The Caffrees, the Hottentots, the Topinamboux, and many other petty nations, have no god: that may be; but it does not imply that they deny the existence of a Deity: they neither deny nor affirm; they have never heard a word about him. Tell them that there is a God, they will readily believe it: tell them that every thing is the work of nature, and they will as cordially believe that. You may as well say, that they are Anti-cartesians, as call them atheists. They are mere children, and a child is neither atheist nor theist: he is nothing.

What are the inferences from all this? that atheism is a most pernicious monster in sovereign princes, and likewise in statesmen, however harmless their lives be, because, from their cabinet, they can make their way to the former; that, if it be not so mischievous as fanaticism, it is almost ever destructive to virtue. I congratulate the present age on there being fewer atheists now than ever, philosophers having discovered, that there is no vegetable without a germ, no germ without design, &c. and that corn is not produced by putrefaction.

Some unphilosophical geometricians have rejected final causes, but they are admitted by all real philosophers; and, to use the expression of a known author, "A catechist makes God known to children, and Newton demonstrates him to the learned."

BAPTISM.

A GREEK word, signifying *Immersion.* Men, being ever led by their senses, easily came to fancy that what washed the body, likewise cleansed the soul. In the vaults under the Egyptian temples, were large tubs, for the ablutions of the priests and the initiated. The Indians, from time immemorial, purified themselves in the Ganges, and the ceremony still exists among them. The Hebrews adopted it, baptizing

all proselytes who would not submit to be circumcised: especially the women, (as exempt from that operation, except in Ethiopia only,) were baptized. It was as regeneration; it imparted a new soul among them, as it did in Egypt. Concerning this, see Epiphanius, Maimonides, and the Gemara.

John baptized in the Jordan: he baptized even Jesus Christ himself, who, however, never baptized any one, yet was pleased to consecrate this ancient ceremony. All signs are of themselves indifferent, and God annexes his grace to such as he thinks fit to choose. Baptism soon became the principal rite, and the seal of Christianity. The first fifteen bishops of Jerusalem were all circumcised, and there is no certainty of their having ever been baptized.

In the first ages of Christianity, this sacrament was abused, nothing being more common than to delay baptism till the agony of death; of this, the emperor Constantine is no slight proof. This was his way of reasoning: Baptism washes away all sin; so that I may kill my wife, my son, and all my relations; then I shall get myself baptized, and so go to heaven; and he acted accordingly. Such an instance carried danger with it, and, by degrees, the custom of delaying the sacred laver till death wore off.

The Greeks always adhered to baptism by immersion; but the Latins, towards the end of the eighth century, having extended their religion over Gaul and Germany, and seeing that immersion in cold countries did not agree with children, substituted aspersion, or sprinkling, in its stead, for which they were often anathemized by the Greek church.

St. Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, being asked whether they whose bodies had been only sprinkled were really baptized, he answers, in his seventieth letter, that several churches did not hold them to be Christians; that he does; but, withal, what grace they have is infinitely less than that of those, who, according to the primitive rite, had been dipped three times.

After immersion, a Christian became initiated, whereas before he was only a catechumen; but initiation required securities and sponsors, who were called by a name answerable to that of godfathers, that the church might be sure of the fidelity of the new Christians, and the sacred mysteries be not divulged. Wherefore, during the first centuries, the Pagans, in general, knew as little of the Christian mysteries, as the Christians did of the mysteries of Isis and Eleusis.

Cyril of Alexandria, in a writing of his against the emperor Julian, delivers himself thus: "I would speak a word of

baptism, did I not fear, that what I say might come to those who are not initiated."

Children were baptized so early as the second century, it being, indeed, very natural that Christians should be solicitous for this sacrament to be administered to their children, as, without it, they would be damned; and, at length, it was concluded that the time of administration should be at the end of eight days, in imitation of the Jews administering circumcision. The Greek church still retains this custom. However, in the third century, the custom prevailed, of not being baptized till near death.

Those who died in the first week, some rigid fathers of the church held to be damned; but Peter Chrysologus, in the fifth century, found out Limbo, a kind of mitigated hell, or, properly, the borders or suburbs of hell; whither unbaptized children go, and the abode of the patriarchs before Jesus Christ descended into hell; and, ever since, it has been the current opinion that Jesus Christ descended into Limbo, and not into Hell itself.

It has been debated whether a Christian could, in the deserts of Arabia, be baptized with sand; but carried in the negative: whether rose-water might be used for baptism; it was decided that it must be pure water, yet muddy water would do on an emergency. Thus the whole of this discipline appears to depend on the prudence of the primitive pastors, by whom it was instituted.

BEASTS.

Is it possible any one should say, or affirm in writing, that beasts are machines, void of knowledge and sense, have a sameness in all their operations, neither learning nor perfecting any thing, &c.

How! this bird, which makes a semicircular nest, when he fixes it against a wall; who, when in an angle, shapes it like a quadrant, and circular when he builds it in a tree,—is this having a sameness in its operations? Does this hound, after three months' teaching, know no more than when you first took him in hand? Your canary bird,—does he repeat a tune at first hearing? or, rather, is it not some time before you can bring him to it? Is he not often out? and does he not improve by practice?

Is it from my speaking, that you allow me sense, memory,

and ideas? Well, I am silent; but you see me come home very melancholy, and with eager anxiety look for a paper; open the bureau where I remember to have put it, take it up, and read it with apparent joy. You hence infer, that I have felt pain and pleasure, and that I have memory and knowledge.

Make then the like inference concerning this dog, who, having lost his master, runs about every where with melancholy yellings, comes home all in a ferment, runs up and down, roves from room to room, till, at length, he finds his beloved master in his closet, and then expresses his joy in softer cries, gesticulations, and fawnings.

This dog, so very superior to man in affection, is seized by some barbarian virtuosos, who nail him down on a table, and dissect him while living, the better to show you the meseraic veins. All the same organs of sensation, which are in yourself, you perceive in him. Now, machinist, what say you? answer me, has nature created all the springs of feeling in this animal, that it may not feel? Has it nerves to be impassible? For shame! Charge not nature with such weakness and inconsistency.

But the scholastic doctors ask, what is the soul of beasts? This is a question I do not understand. A tree has the faculty of receiving sap into its fibres, of circulating it, of unfolding the buds of its leaves and fruits: do you now ask me what the soul of a tree is? It has received these properties, as the animal above has received those of sensation, memory, and a certain number of ideas. Who formed all those properties? who has imparted all these faculties? He who causes the grass of the field to grow, and the earth to gravitate towards the sun.

"The souls of beasts are substantial forms," says Aristotle, who has been followed by the Arabian school, and this by the Angelic school, and the Angelic school by the Sorbonne, and the Sorbonne by nobody in the world.

"The souls of beasts are material," is the cry of other philosophers, but as little to the purpose as the former: when called upon to define a material soul, they only perplex the cause: they must necessarily allow it to be sensitive matter. But whence does it derive this sensation? from a material soul; which must mean, that it is matter giving sensation to matter: beyond this circle they have nothing to say.

According to others, equally wise, the soul of beasts is a spiritual essence, dying with the body; but where are your proofs? What idea have you of this spiritual being? which,

with its sensation, memory, and its share of ideas and combinations, will never be able to know as much as a child of six years. What grounds have you to think that this incorporeal being dies with the body? but still more stupid are they who affirm this soul to be neither body nor spirit. A fine system truly! By spirit we can mean only something unknown, which is not body: so that the upshot of this wise system is, that the soul of beasts is a substance, which is neither body nor something which is not body.

Whence can so many contradictory errors arise? From a custom which has always prevailed among men, of investigating the nature of a thing, before they knew whether any such thing existed. The sucker, or clapper of a bellows is likewise called the soul of the bellows. Well; what is this soul? it is only a name I have given to that sucker or clapper which falls down, lets in the air, and, rising again, propels it through a pipe, on my working the bellows.

Here is no soul distinct from the machine itself. But who puts the bellows of animals in motion? I have already told you; he who puts the heavenly bodies in motion. The philosopher who said, "*Deus est anima brutorum*," was in the right: but he should have gone further.

BEAUTY—BEAUTIFUL.

Ask a toad, what is beauty—the supremely beautiful—the *To-kalon?* he will answer you, that it is his female, with two large, round eyes, projecting out of its little head; a broad, flat neck, yellow belly, and dark-brown back. Ask a Guinea Negro, and with him, beauty is a greasy black skin, hollow eyes, and a flat nose. Put the question to the devil, and he will tell you, that beauty is a pair of horns, four claws, and a tail. Consult the philosophers likewise, and they will give you some unintelligible jargon for answer: they must have something correspondent to beauty in the abstract, to the *To-kalon.*

I once sat next to a philosopher at a tragedy: "That is beautiful," said he. "How beautiful?" said I. "Because the author has attained his end." The next day he took a dose of physic, which had a very good effect. "That is a beautiful physic," said I: "it has attained its end." He perceived that a medicine is not to be called beautiful, and that the word *beauty* is applicable only to those things which

give a pleasure, accompanied with admiration. That tragedy, he said, had excited these two sensations in him, and that was the *To-kalon*, the *beautiful*.

We went to England together, and happened to be at the same play, perfectly well translated; but the spectators, one and all, yawned. "Oh-ho!" said he, "the *To-kalon*, I find, is not the same in England as in France;" and, after several pertinent reflections, he concluded, that beauty is very relative; that what is decent at Japan, is indecent at Rome; and what is fashionable at Paris, is otherwise at Pekin: and thus he saved himself the trouble of composing a long *Treatise on the Beautiful!*

BODY.

As we know nothing of spirit, so are we alike ignorant of body: we perceive some properties; but what is this subject in which these properties reside? "All is body," said Democritus and Epicurus:——"There is no body at all," said the disciples of Zeno, the Elæan.

Berkeley, bishop of Cloyne, is the last who has gone about to prove the non-existence of bodies; and he deals chiefly in captious sophisms. "There is," says he, "neither colour, smell, nor heat, in them; these modalities are in your sensations, and not in the objects;" a truth which, being before sufficiently known, he needed not to have taken the trouble of proving. But from thence he proceeds to extension and solidity, which are essential to body, and is for proving, that there is no extension in a piece of green cloth, because this cloth, in reality, is not green; this sensation of green is only in you, therefore the sensation of extension is likewise only in you; and, having overthrown extension, he concludes, that, solidity being annexed to it, falls of itself; and thus there is nothing in the world but our ideas. So that, according to this philosopher, ten thousand men, killed by as many cannon shot, are, in reality, only ten thousand conceptions of our minds.

My lord of Cloyne might have avoided exposing himself to such ridicule. He fancies he proves, that there is no such thing as extension, because a body through a glass appeared to him four times larger than to his naked eye, and four times smaller through another glass: thence he concludes, that as the extension of a body cannot, at the same time, be four feet, six feet, and only one foot, such extension exists not; then there is nothing. He needed only to have taken a measure,

and say, "however extended a body may appear to me, its actual extension is so many of these measures."

He might easily have seen that extension and solidity are very different from sounds, colours, tastes, and smells, &c. These are manifestly sensations excited by the configuration of the parts. But extension is not a sensation; though, on the going out of a fire, I no longer feel heat; on the agitation of the air ceasing, I hear nothing; and, from a withered flower I smell nothing: yet the fire, the air, and the flower, have all their extension, without any relation to me. Berkeley's paradox really does not deserve a formal refutation.

But the cream of the jest is to know, what led him into this paradox. A long time ago, I had some talk with him, when he told me, that his opinion originally proceeded from the inconceivableness of what the subject of extension is; and, indeed, he triumphs, in that part of his book, where he asks Hilas, what this same subject, this *substratum*, this substance is. "It is," answers Hilas, "the body extended:" then the bishop, under the name of Philonous, laughs at him; and poor Hilas, perceiving that he had said extension was the subject of extension, and thus had talked sillily, is quite abashed, and owns, that it is utterly inconceivable to him; that there is no such thing as body; that the world, instead of being material, as is commonly thought, is intellectual.

It would have become Philonous only to have said to Hilas, we know nothing concerning the constitution of this subject, of this extended, solid, divisible, moveable, figured substance, &c. We know no more of it, than of the thinking, feeling, and willing subject; still this subject certainly exists, since it has essential properties, from which it cannot be separated.

We are all like the Paris ladies; they live high, without knowing the ingredients in ragouts; so we make use of bodies, without knowing the composition of them. What is body made of? Of parts, and these parts reducible to other parts. What are those last parts? Still bodies? So you go on dividing, and are never nearer the mark.

At length, a subtile philosopher observing, that a picture is made of ingredients, none of which is a picture, and a house of materials, of which none is a house, fancied bodies to be constructed of innumerable little beings, which are not bodies, and these are the *monades* so much talked of. This system, however, has its fair side; and, had it been confirmed by Revelation, I should think it very possible. All these minute beings would be mathematical points, species of souls waiting only for a tegument, to put themselves into it. This would

make a continual metempsychosis, a monade entering sometimes into a whale, sometimes into a tree, and sometimes into a juggler. This system is full as good as another: I can relish it full as well as the declension of atoms, the substantial forms, versatile grâce, and Don Calmet's vampires.

THE CHINESE CATECHISM;

OR,

Dialogues between Cu-su, *a Disciple of Confucius, and Prince* Kou, *Son to the King of Lou, tributary to the Chinese Emperor, Gnenwan, four hundred and seventeen years before our common era.*

Translated into Latin by Father Fouquet, formerly a Jesuit. The manuscript is in the Vatican Library, Number 42759.

Kou. What is meant by my duty to worship heaven (Changti?)

Cu-su. Not the material heaven, which we see; for this heaven is nothing but the air, and the air is composed of every kind of earthly exhalation. Now, what a folly would it be to worship vapours!

Kou. It is, however, what I should not much wonder at; men, in my opinion, have gone into greater follies.

Cu-su. Very true; but you, being born to rule over others, it becomes you to be wise.

Kou. There are whole nations who worship heaven and the planets.

Cu-su. The planets are only so many earths, like ours; the moon, for instance, might as well worship our sand and dirt, as we prostrate ourselves before the moon's sand and dirt.

Kou. What is the meaning of what we so often hear, heaven and earth; to go up to heaven; to be deserving of heaven?

Cu-su. It is talking very sillily: there is no such thing as heaven; every planet is environed with its atmosphere as with a shell, and rolls in the space round its sun; every sun is the centre of several planets, which are continually going their rounds: there is nether high nor low, up nor down. Should the inhabitants of the moon talk of going up to the earth, of making one's self deserving of the earth, it would be talking madly; and we are little wiser in talking of deserving heaven.

We might as well say, a man must make himself deserving of the air, deserving of the constellation of the dragon, deserving of space.

Kou. I believe I understand you: we are only to worship God, who made heaven and earth.

Cu-su. To be sure; we are to worship God alone. But, in saying that he made heaven and earth, however devout our meaning may be, it is talking very sillily; for if, by heaven, we mean the prodigious space in which God kindled so many suns, and set so many worlds in motion, it is much more ridiculous to say, "heaven and earth," than to say, "the mountains and a grain of sand." Our globe is infinitely less than a grain of sand, in comparison of those millions of ten thousands of millions of worlds, among the infinitude of which we are lost. All that we can do, is, to join our feeble voice to that of the innumerable beings, which, throughout the abyss of expansion, ascribe homage and glory to their adorable Creator.

Kou. It was, then, a great imposition to tell us, that Fo came down among us from the fourth heaven, assuming the form of a white elephant.

Cu-su. These are tales which the bonzes tell to old women and children. The Eternal Author of all things is alone to be worshipped.

Kou. But how can one being make the other beings?

Cu-su. You see yonder star: it is fifteen hundred thousand millions of *Lis* from our globe, and emits rays which, on your eyes, form two angles equal at the top; and the like angles they form on the eyes of all animals. Is not this manifest design? Is not this an admirable law? and is it not the workman who makes a work? and, who frames laws but a legislator? Therefore there is an eternal Artist, an eternal Legislator.

Kou. But who made this Artist? and what is he like?

Cu-su. My dear prince, as I was yesterday walking near the vast palace, lately built by the king, your father, I overheard two crickets; one said to the other, "What a stupendous fabric is here!"—"Yes," said the other; "and though I am not a little proud of my species, he who has made this prodigy, must be something above a cricket; but I have no idea of that being. Such a one, I see there must be; but what he is, I know not."

Kou. You are a cricket of infinitely more knowledge than I; and what I particularly like in you is, your not pretending to know, what you really do not know.

SECOND DIALOGUE.

Cu-su. You allow, then, that there is an Almighty Being, self-existent, supreme Creator and Maker of all nature.

Kou. Yes; but, if he be self-existent, he is unlimited; consequently, he is every where; he exists throughout all matter, and in every part of myself.

Cu-su. Why not?

Kou. I should, then, be a part of the Deity.

Cu-su. Perhaps that may not be the consequence. Behold this piece of glass; you see the light penetrates it every where; yet, will you say it is light? It is mere sand, and nothing more: unquestionably every thing is in God; that, by which every thing is animated, must be every where. God is not like the emperor of China, who dwells in his palace, and sends his orders by kolaos. As existing, he must necessarily fill the whole of space, and all his works: and, since he is in you, this is a continual monition never to do any thing to raise shame or remorse.

Kou. But, for a person serenely to consider himself before the Supreme Being, without shame or disgust, what must he do?

Cu-su. Be just.

Kou. And what further?

Cu-su. Be just.

Kou. But Laokium's sect says, "There is no such thing as just or unjust, vice or virtue."

Cu-su. And does Laokium's sect say, "There is no such thing as health or sickness?"

Kou. No, to be sure; what egregious nonsense that would be!

Cu-su. And let me tell you, that to think there is neither health nor sickness of soul, virtue, nor vice, is as egregious an error, and much more mischievous. They, who have advanced, that every thing is alike, are monsters: is it alike, carefully to bring up a son; or at his birth to dash him against the stones; to relieve a mother, or to plunge a dagger into her heart?

Kou. That is horrible! I detest Laokium's sect; but *just* and *unjust* are oftentimes so interwoven, that one is at a loss. Who can be said precisely to know what is forbidden, and what is allowed? Who can safely set limits to good and evil? I wish you would give me a sure rule for this important distinction.

Cu-su. There can be no better than that of Confutzee, my master; "Live as thou wouldest have lived, when thou comest to die; use thy neighbour as thou wouldest have him use thee."

Kou. Those maxims, I own, should be mankind's standing law. But what am I the better for my good life, when I come to die? What mighty advantage shall I get by my virtue? That clock goes as well as ever clock did; but, when it comes to be worn out, or should it be destroyed by accident, will it be happy for having struck the hours regularly?

Cu-su. That clock is without thought or feeling, and incapable of remorse, which you sharply feel on the commission of any crime.

Kou. But what if, by frequent crimes, I come to be no longer sensible of remorse?

Cu-su. Then it is high time an end should be put to your being; and, take my word for it, that, as men do not love to be oppressed, should that be the case, one or other would stop you in your career, and save you the committing any more crimes.

Kou. At that rate God, who is in them, after allowing me to be wicked, would allow them likewise to be so.

Cu-su. God has endued you with reason; neither you nor they are to make a wrong use of it; as, otherwise, you will not only be unhappy in this life, but how do you know but you may likewise be so in another?

Kou. And who told you there is another life?

Cu-su. The bare uncertainty of it should make you behave as if it were an undoubted certainty.

Kou. But what if I be sure there is no such thing?

Cu-su. That I defy you to make good.

THIRD DIALOGUE.

Kou. You urge me home, Cu-su. My being rewarded or punished after death, requires that something, which feels and thinks in me, must continue to subsist after me; now, as no part in me had any thought or sense before my birth, why should it after my death? What can this incomprehensible part of myself be? Will the humming of that bee continue after the end of its existence? or the vegetation of this plant when plucked up by the roots? Is not *vegetation* a word made use of to express the inexplicable mode appointed by the Supreme Being, for the plants imbibing the juices of the

earth? So the *soul* is an invented word, faintly and obscurely denoting the spring of human life. All animals have a motion, and this ability to move, is called active force; but this force is no distinct being whatever. We have passions, memory, and reason; but these passions, this memory, and this reason, are surely not separate things; they are not beings existing in us; they are not diminutive persons of a particular existence; they are generical words, invented to fix our ideas. Thus the soul itself, which signifies our memory, our reason, our passions, is only a bare word. Whence, then, motion in nature? from God. Whence vegetation in that plant? from God. Whence motion in animals? from God. Whence cogitation in man? from God.

Were the human soul a diminutive person, inclosed within our body, to direct its motions and ideas, would not that betray in the eternal Maker of the world, an impotence and an artifice quite unworthy of him? He then must have been incapable of making automata, which shall have the gift of motion and thought in themselves. When I learned Greek under you, you made me read Homer, where Vulcan appears to me an excellent smith, when he makes golden tripods going of themselves to the council of the gods; but, had this same Vulcan concealed within those tripods one of his boys, to make them move without being perceived, I should think him but a bungling cheat.

Some low-thoughted dreamers have been charmed with the fancy of the planets being rolled along by genii, as something very grand and sublime; but God has not been reduced to such a paltry shift: in a word, wherefore put two springs to a work when one will do? That God can animate that so little known being which we call matter, you dare not deny; why, then, should he make use of another agent to animate it?

Further: what may that soul be, which you are pleased to give to our body? From whence did it come? When did it come? Must the Creator of the universe be continually watching the copulation of men and women? closely observing the moment when a germ issues from a man's body, and passes into that of a woman, and then quickly inject a soul into this germ? And, if this germ die, what becomes of its soul? either it must have been created ineffectually, or must wait another opportunity.

This is really a strange employment for the Sovereign of the world; and it is not only on the copulation of the human species that he must be continually intent, but must observe

the like vigilance and celerity with all animals whatever; for, like us, they have memory, ideas, and passions; and if a soul be necessary for the formation of these sentiments, these ideas, these passions, and this memory, God must be perpetually at work, about souls for elephants and flies, for fish and for bonzes.

What ideas does such a notion give of the Architect of so many millions of worlds, thus obliged to be continually making invisible props for perpetuating his work?

These are some, though a very small sample, of the reasons for questioning the soul's existence.

Cu-su. You reason candidly; and such a virtuous turn of mind, even if mistaken, cannot but be agreeable to the Supreme Being. You may be in error, but as you do not endeavour to deceive yourself, your error is excusable. But consider, what you have proposed to me are only doubts, and melancholy doubts; listen to probabilities of a solacing nature; to be annihilated is dismal; hope then for life. A thought, you know, is not matter nor has any affinity with it. Why then do you make such a difficulty of believing that God has put a divine principle into you, which, being indissoluble, cannot be subject to death? Can you say that it is impossible that you should have a soul? No, certainly: and if it be possible that [illegible] have one, is it not also very probable? How can you reject so noble a system, and so necessary to mankind? Shall a few slender objections withhold your assent?

Kou. I would embrace this system with all my heart, on its being proved to me; but it is not in my power to believe without evidence. I am always struck with this grand idea, that God has made every thing; that he is every where; that he pénetrates all things, and gives life and motion to all things; and if he be in all the parts of my being, as he is in all the parts of nature, I do not see any need I have of a soul. Where is the use or importance of this little subaltern being to me, who am animated by God himself? Of what improvement can it be? It is not from ourselves that we derive our ideas; they generally obtrude themselves on us against our wills; we have them when locked up in sleep; every thing passes in us without our intervention. What would it signify to the soul, were it to say to the blood and animal spirits, "Be so kind as to gratify me in running this way?" they will still circulate in their natural course. Let me be the machine of a God, whose existence all things proclaim aloud, rather than of a soul, whose existence is a very great uncertainty.

Cu-su. Well, if God himself *animate* you, be very careful of committing any crime, as defiling that God who is within you; and, if he have given you a soul, never let it offend him. In both systems you have a volition, you are free; that is, you have a power of doing what you will; make use of this power in serving that God who gave it you. If you be a philosopher, so much the better; but it is necessary for you to be just; and you will be more so when you come to believe that you have an immortal soul. Please to answer me, Is not God sovereign and perfect justice?

Kou. Doubtless; and could he cease to be so, (which is blasphemy to think,) I would myself act equitably.

Cu-su. Will it not be your duty, when on the throne, to reward virtue and punish vice? and can you think of God's not doing what is incumbent on yourself to do? You know that there are, and ever will be, in this life, good men distressed, while bad men prosper: therefore, good and evil must be finally judged in another life. It is this, so simple, so general, and so natural an opinion, which has introduced and fixed among so many nations the belief of the immortality of our souls, and their being judged by Divine Justice, on their quitting this mortal tenement. Is there, can there be, a system more rational, more suitable to the Deity, and more beneficial to mankind?

Kou. Why, then, have so many nations rejected this system? You know that, in our province, we have about two hundred families of the old Sinous, who formerly dwelt in part of Arabia Petræa; and neither they, nor their ancestors, ever believed any thing of the immortality of the soul: they have their five books, as we have our five *Kings:* I have read a translation of them. Their laws, which necessarily correspond with those of all other nations, enjoin them to respect their parents, not to steal nor lie, and to abstain from adultery and bloodshed; yet these laws are wholly silent, as to the rewards and punishments in another life.

Cu-su. If this truth have not yet been made known to those poor people, unquestionably their eyes will one day be opened. But what signifies a small obscure tribe, when the Babylonians, the Egyptians, the Indians, and all polished nations, have subscribed to this salutary doctrine! If you were sick, would you decline making use of a remedy, approved by all the Chinese, because some barbarous mountaineers had expressed a dislike to it? God has endued you with reason, and this reason tells you, that the soul must be immortal; therefore, it is God himself who tells you so.

Kou. But, how can I be rewarded or punished, when I shall cease to be myself? when nothing which had constituted my person will be remaining? It is only by my memory that I am always myself: now, my memory I lose in my last illness; so that, after my death, nothing under a miracle can restore it to me, and thus replace me in my former existence.

Cu-su. That is as much as to say, should a prince, after making his way to the throne by the murder of all his relations, play the tyrant over his subjects, he *need* only say to God, "It is not I; I have totally lost my memory; you mistake, I am no longer the same person." Think you God would be very well pleased with such a sophism?

Kou. Well, I acquiesce. I was for living irreproachable for my own sake, now I will do so to please the Supreme Being. I thought the whole matter was for my soul to be just and virtuous in this life; but I will now hope, that it will be happy in another. This opinion, I perceive, makes for the good both of subjects and sovereigns: still the worship of the Deity perplexes me.

FOURTH DIALOGUE.

Cu-su. Why, what is there that can offend you in our Chuking, the first canonical book, and which all the Chinese emperors have so greatly respected? You plough a field with your own royal hands, by way of setting an example to the people; and the first fruits of it you offer to the Chang-ti, to the Tien, to the Supreme Being, and sacrifice to him four times every year. You are king and high-priest; you promise God to do all the good which shall be in your power. Is there any thing in this which you cannot digest?

Kou. I am very far from making any exceptions. I know that God has no need either of our sacrifices or prayers, but the offering them to him is very needful for us. His worship was not instituted for himself, but on our account. I am very much delighted with praying, and am particularly careful that there be nothing ridiculous in my prayers; for, were I to cry out till my throat be sore, "That the mountain of Chang-ti *is* a fat mountain, and that fat mountains are not to be looked on;" though I should have put the sun to flight, and dried up the moon, will this rant be acceptable to the Supreme Being? or of any benefit to my subjects or myself?

Especially, I cannot bear with the silliness of the sects about us: on one side is Laotze, whom his mother conceived by the

junction of heaven and earth, and was fourscore years pregnant with him. I as little believe his doctrine of universal deprivation and annihilation, as his being born with white hair, or going to promulgate his doctrine on a black cow.

The god Fo I put on the same footing, notwithstanding he had a white elephant for his father, and promises immortal life. One thing, at which I cannot forbear taking great offence, is the bonzes continually preaching such chimeras, thus deceiving the people, in order the better to sway them; they gain to themselves respect by mortification, at which, indeed, nature shudders. Some deny themselves, during their whole lives, the most salutary foods, as if there were no way of pleasing God, but by a bad diet. Others carry a pillory about their necks, and sometimes they richly deserve it: they drive nails into their thighs, as into boards; and for these things the people follow them in crowds. On the king's issuing any edict which does not suit their humour, they coolly tell their auditors, that this edict is not to be found in the commentary of the god Fo, and that god is to be obeyed in preference to men. Now, how am I to remedy this popular distemper, which is extravagant to the highest degree, and not less dangerous? Toleration, you know, is the principle of the Chinese, and, indeed, of all Asiatic governments; but such an indulgence must be owned to be highly mischievous, as exposing an empire to be overthrown on account of some fanatical notions.

Cu-su. God forbid, that I should go about to extinguish in you the spirit of toleration, that quality so eminently respectable, and which, to souls, is what the permission of eating is to bodies. By the law of nature, every one may believe what he will, as well as eat what he will. A physician is not to kill his patients, for not observing the diet which he had prescribed to them; neither has a sovereign a right to hang his subjects for not thinking as he thinks; but he has a right to prevent disturbances, and, with prudent measures, he will very easily root out superstitions of all kinds. You know what happened to Daon, the sixth king of Chaldea, about four thousand years ago?

Kou. No. I pray you oblige me with an account of it.

Cu-su. The Chaldean priests had taken it into their heads to worship the pikes of the Euphrates, pretending that a famous pike, called Oannes, had formerly taught them divinity; that this pike was immortal, three feet in length, and a small crescent on the tail. In veneration to this Oannes, no pikes were to be eaten. A mighty dispute arose among the divines, whether the pike Oannes had a soft or hard roe. Both parties

not only fulminated excommunications, but they, several times, came to blows. To put an end to such disturbances, king Daon made use of this expedient: he ordered a strict fast for three days to both parties, and, at the expiration of it, sent for the sticklers for the hard-roed pike, who, accordingly, were present at his dinner; a pike was brought to him, three feet in length, and, on the tail, a small crescent had been put. "Is this your God?" said he, to the doctors. "Yes, sir," answered they; "we know him by the crescent on the tail, and make no question but he is hard-roed." On this, the king ordered the pike to be opened: it was found to have the finest melt that could be. "Now," said the king, "you see this is not your god, it being soft-roed;" and the king and his nobles ate the pike. The hard-roed divines were not a little pleased, that the god of their adversaries had been fried.

Immediately after, the doctors of the opposite side were sent for, and a pike of three feet, with a crescent on his tail, being shown to them, they, with great joy, assured his majesty, that it was the god Oannes, and that he had a soft-roe; but, behold! on being opened, it was found hard-roed. At this, the two parties, equally out of countenance, and still fasting, the good-natured king told them, that he could only give them a dinner of pikes; and they greedily fell to eating both hard and soft-roed without distinction. This closed the civil war, with great applauses for king Daon's wisdom and goodness; and, since that time, the people have been allowed to eat pikes as often as they pleased.

Kou. Well done, king Daon! and I give you my word I will follow his example on every occasion, and, as far as I can, without injuring any one: there shall be no worshipping of *Fo's* and pikes.

I know that in the countries of Pegu and Tonquin, there are little gods and little Talapoins, which bring down the moon when in the wane, and clearly foretel what is to come; that is, they clearly see what is not; for futurity is not. I will take care that the Talapoins shall not come within my reach, to make futurity present, and bring down the moon.

It is a shame that there should be sects rambling from town to town, propagating their delusions, as quacks do their medicaments. What a disgrace is it to the human mind, for petty nations to think that truth belongs to them alone, and that the vast empire of China is given up to error. Is, then, the Eternal Being only the god of the island of Formosa, or Borneo? Has he no concern for the other parts of the universe? My dear Cu-su, he is a father to all men; he allows every one to

eat pike: the most acceptable homage, which can be paid to him, is being virtuous; the finest of all his temples, as the great emperor Hiao used to say, is a pure heart.

FIFTH DIALOGUE.

Cu-su. Since you love virtue, in what manner do you propose to practise it, when you come to be king?

Kou. In not being unjust to my neighbours, or my subjects.

Cu-su. To do no harm, does not come up to virtue. I hope my prince will do good; will feed the poor, by employing them in useful labour, and not endow sloth; mend and embellish the highways, dig canals, build public edifices, encourage arts, reward merit of every kind, and pardon involuntary faults.

Kou. This I call not being unjust: those things are plain duties.

Cu-su. Your way of thinking becomes a king: but there is the king and the man: the public life and the private life. You will be married: how many wives do you think of having?

Kou. Why, a dozen, I think, will do; a greater number might be an avocation from business. I do not approve of kings with their three hundred wives and seven hundred concubines, and thousands of eunuchs to wait on them. This humour of having eunuchs, especially, appears to me a most execrable insult and outrage to human nature. The castrating of cocks I can forgive, from eating the better for it; but I never have heard of eunuchs being roasted. What is the use of their being thus mutilated? It improves their voices: the Dela-i Lama has fifty of them purely to sing in his pagoda. Let him tell me, whether the Chang-ti be much delighted with the clear pipes of these fifty geldings.

Another most ridiculous thing is the bonzes not marrying. They boast of being wiser than the other Chinese; well, then, let them show their wisdom in getting wise children. An odd manner of worshipping the Chang-ti, to deprive him of worshippers; and, to be sure, they must have a great affection for mankind, who go the way to extinguish the species! The good little Lama, called Stelca Isant Erèpi, used to say, "That every priest ought to get as many children as he could:" what he preached, he practised, and was very useful in his generation. For my part, I shall marry all the lamas and bonzes, and lamasses and bonzesses, who shall appear to have a call to the holy work; besides making them better patriots, I shall think it no small service to my dominions.

Cu-su. What an excellent prince shall we have in you! I cannot forbear weeping for joy. But you will not be satisfied with having wives and subjects, for, after all, one cannot be perpetually drawing up edicts, and getting children; you will likewise make yourself some friends.

Kou. I am not without some already, and those good ones; putting me in mind of my faults; and I allow myself the liberty of reproving theirs; we likewise mutually comfort and encourage one another. Friendship is the balm of life: it excels that of the chemist Eruil; and even all the nostrums of the great Ranoud are not comparable to it. I think friendship should have been made a religious precept. I have a good mind to insert it in our ritual.

Cu-su. By no means; friendship is sufficiently sacred of itself. Never enjoin it: the heart must be free: besides, were you to make a precept, a mystery, a right, a ceremony, of friendship, it would soon become ridiculous through the fantastical preachings and writings of the bonzes: let it not be exposed to such profanation.

But how will you deal with your enemies? Confutzee, I believe, in no less than twenty places, directs us to love them; does not this appear somewhat difficult to you?

Kou. Love one's enemies! Oh, dear, doctor! nothing is more common.

Cu-su. But what do you mean by love?

Kou. Mean by it! what it really is. I was a volunteer under the prince of Decon, against the prince of Vis-brunk: when a wounded enemy fell into our hands, we took as much care of him as if he had been our brother: we have often parted with our beds to them, and we lay by them on tyger's skins, spread on the bare ground: we have tended and nursed them ourselves! Is not this loving our enemies? You would not have us love them, as a man loves his mistress!

Cu-su. I am exceedingly pleased with your talk, and wish that all nations could hear you; for I have been informed of some, so very conceited and impertinent, as to say, that we know nothing of true virtue; that our good actions are only spacious sins; that we stand in need of their Talapoins to instruct us in right principles! Poor creatures! A few years ago, there was no such thing as reading or writing among them; and now they are for teaching their masters!

SIXTH DIALOGUE.

Cu-su. I shall not repeat to you the common places, which, for these five or six thousand years past, have been retailed among us, relating to all the several virtues. Some there are which only concern ourselves, as prudence in the guidance of our souls; temperance in the government of our bodies; but these are rather dictates of policy, and care of health: the real virtues are those which promote the welfare of society, as fidelity, magnanimity, beneficence, toleration, &c. and, thank Heaven! these are the first things which every woman, among us, teaches her children: they are the rudiments of the rising generation, both in town and country; but I am sorry to say it, there is a great virtue which is sadly on the decline among us.

Kou. Quickly name it, and no endeavour of mine shall be wanting to revive it.

Cu-su. It is hospitality; for, since inns have got footing among us, this so social a virtue, this sacred tie of mankind, becomes more and more relaxed: that pernicious institution, I am told, we have borrowed from some western savages, who, probably, have no houses to entertain travellers. My heart melts with delight, when I have the happiness of entertaining, in the vast city of Lou, in Honcham, that superb square, or my delicious seat of Ki, some generous stranger come from Samarcand, to whom, from that moment, I become sacred, and who, by all laws human and divine, is bound to entertain me, on any call I may have in Tartary; and to be my cordial friend.

The savages I am speaking of, do not admit strangers into their huts, filthy as they are, without their paying, and dearly too, for such sordid reception; and yet those wretches, I hear, think themselves above us; and that our morality is nothing in comparison to theirs; that their preachers excel Confutzee himself: in a word, they alone know what true justice is, and a sign of it is; they sell on the roads some sophisticated stuff for wine, and their women, as if mad, rove about the streets, and dance, whilst ours are breeding silk-worms.

Kou. I very much approve of hospitality, and the practice of it gives me pleasure; but I am afraid it will be much abused. Near Thibet dwells a people, who, besides the badness of their habitations, being of a roving disposition, will, on any trifle, go from one end of the world to the other; and, on your having occasion to go to Thibet, so far from returning your

hospitality, they have nothing to set before you, nor so much as a bed for you to lie on: this is enough to put one out of conceit with courtesy.

Cu-su. These disappointments may easily be remedied, by entertaining such persons only as come well recommended. Every virtue has its difficulties and dangers, and, without them, the practice of virtue would want much of its glory and excellence. How wise and holy is our Confutzee! There is not a virtue which he does not inculcate: every sentence of his is pregnant with the happiness of mankind: one, at present, recurs to me; I think it is the fifty-third: "Kindnesses acknowledge with kindness, and never revenge injuries." What a maxim! what a law! Can the western people bring any thing in competition with such exalted morality? Then, in how many places, and how strongly, does he recommend humility! Did this amiable virtue prevail among men, there would be an end of all quarrels and broils.

Kou. I have read all that Confutzee, and the sages before him, have said about humility; but none of them, I think, have been sufficiently accurate in their definition of it. There may, perhaps, be but little humility in taking on one to censure them; but, with all due deference, I own that they are beyond my comprehension. What is your idea of humility?

Cu-su. Humility, I take to be mental modesty; for, as to external modesty, it is no more than civility. Humility cannot consist in denying to one's self that superiority which we may have acquired above another. An able physician cannot but be sensible that he is possessed of a knowledge infinitely beyond his delirious patient. The teacher of astronomy must necessarily think himself more learned than his scholar; but they must not pride themselves on their superior acquirements. Humility is not debasement, but a corrective to self-love, as modesty is the temperament to pride.

Kou. Well, it is in the practice of all these virtues, and the worship of one simple and universal God, that I propose to live, far from the chimeras of sophists, and the illusion of false prophets. The love of mankind shall be my virtue, and the love of God my religion. As to the god Fo, and Laotzee, and Vishnou, who has so often become incarnate among the Indians; and Sammonocodom, who came down from heaven to fly a kite among the Siamese, together with the Camis, who went from the moon to visit Japan,—I cannot endure such impious fooleries.

How weak, and, at the same time, how cruel, is it for a people to conceit, that there is no god but with them alone! it is

downright blasphemy. 'The light of the sun irradiates all nations, but the light of God shines only in a little, insignificant tribe, in a corner of this globe! That ever such a thought could enter the mind of man! The Deity speaks to the heart of all men of all nations, and they should, from one end of the universe to the other, be linked together in the bonds of charity.

Cu-su. O wise Kou! you have spoken like one inspired by the Chang-ti himself! You will make a worthy prince. From being my pupil, you are become my teacher.

THE JAPANESE CATECHISM;

OR,

A Dialogue between an INDIAN *and a* JAPANESE.

Ind. Is it so, that formerly, the Japanese knew nothing of cookery; that they had submitted their kingdom to the great Lama; that this great Lama arbitrarily prescribed what they should eat and drink; that he used, at times, to send to you an inferior Lama, for receiving the tributes, who, in return, gave you a sign of protection, which he made with his two forefingers and thumb?

Jap. Alas! it is but too true; nay, all the places of the Canusi, or chief cooks of our island, were disposed of by the Lama, and the love of God was quite out of the question. Further, every house of our seculars paid annually an ounce of silver to this head cook of Thibet, whilst all the amends we had, were some small plates of *relics*, and these none of the best tasted; and, on every new whim of his—as making war against the people of Tangut—we were saddled with fresh subsidies. Our nation frequently complained, but all we got by it, was to pay the more for presuming to complain. At length, love, which does every thing for the best, freed us from this galling thraldom. One of our emperors quarrelled with the great Lama, about a woman; but it must be owned, that they who, in this affair, did us the best turn, were our Canusi, or Pauxcospies: it is to them that, in fact, we owe our deliverance; and it happened in this manner:—the great Lama, forsooth, insisted on being always in the right; our Dairi and Canusi would have it, that sometimes, at least, they might be in the right. This claim the great Lama derided, as an absurdity; on which, our gentry, being as stiff as he was haughty, broke with him for ever.

Ind. Well, ever since you have had golden days, I suppose?

Jap. Far from it: for nearly two hundred years, there was nothing but persecution, violence, and bloodshed among us; and though our Canusi pretended to be in the right, it is but a hundred years since they have had their proper reason; but, from that time, we may boldly esteem ourselves one of the happiest nations on the earth.

Ind. How can that be, if, as is reported, you have no less than twelve different sects of cookery among you? Why you must always be at daggers-drawing.

Jap. Why so? If there be twelve cooks, and each have a different receipt, shall we, instead of dining, cut each other's throats? No: every one may regale himself at that cook's whose manner of dressing victuals he likes best.

Ind. True; tastes are not to be disputed about; yet people will make them a matter of contention, and all sides grow warm.

Jap. After long disputing, men come to see the mischiefs of these jarrings, and at length agree on a reciprocal toleration; and certainly they can do nothing better.

Ind. And pray what are these cooks who make such a stir in your nation, about the art of eating and drinking?

Jap. First, there is the Breuxehs, who never allow any pork or pudding; they hold with the old-fashioned cookery; they would as soon die as lard a fowl; then they deal much in numbers, and if an ounce of silver be to be divided between them and the eleven other cooks, they instantly secure one half to themselves, and the remainder take who will.

Ind. I fancy you do not often foul a plate with these folks.

Jap. Never. Then there is the Pispates, who on some days of the week, and even for a considerable time of the year, will gormandize on turbot, trout, soals, salmon, sturgeon, be they ever so dear, yet would not, for the world, touch a sweetbread of veal, which may be had for a groat.

As for us Canusi, we are very fond of beef and a kind of pastry ware, in Japanese called pudding. Now, all the world allows our cooks to be infinitely more knowing than those of the Pispates; nobody has gone farther than we in finding out what was the garum of the Romans; we surpass all others in our knowledge of the onions of ancient Egypt, the locust paste of the primitive Arabs, the Tartarian horse-*flesh*; and there is always something to be learned in the books of those Canusi commonly known by the name of Pauxcospies.

I shall omit those who eat only in Turlah, those who observe

the Vincal diet, the Batistans, and others; but the Quekars deserve particular notice. Though I have very often been at table with them, I never saw one get drunk, or heard him swear an oath. It is a hard matter to cheat them, but then they never cheat you. The law of loving one's neighbour as one's self, seems really peculiar to them; for, in truth, how can an honest Japanese talk of loving his neighbour as himself, when, for a little pay, he goes as a hireling to blow his brains out, and hew him with a four-inch broad sabre, and all this in form; then he, at the same time, exposes himself to the like fate, to be shot or sabred: so he may, with more truth, be said to hate his neighbour as himself. This is a phrenzy the Quekars were never possessed with. They say, and very justly, that poor mortals are earthen vessels, made to last but a very short time, and that they should not wantonly go and break themselves to pieces, one against another.

I own, that were I not a Canusi I should take part with the Quekars; for you see that there can be no wrangling nor blows with such peaceable cooks. There is another, and a very numerous branch of cooks, called Diestos; with these, every one, without distinction, is welcome to their table, and you are at full liberty to eat as you like; you have larded or barded fowls, or neither larded nor barded, egg sauce, or oil; partridge, salmon, white or red wines; these things they hold as matters of indifference, provided you say a short prayer before and after dinner, and even without this ceremony before breakfast: and with good natured, worthy men, they will banter about the great Lama, the Turlah, Vincal and Memnon, &c.; only these Diestos must acknowledge our Canusi to be very profound cooks; and especially, let them never talk of curtailing our incomes: then we shall live very easily together.

Ind. But still there must be cookery by law established, or the king's cookery.

Jap. There must so; but when the king of Japan has regaled himself plentifully, he should be cheerful and indulgent, and not hinder his good subjects from having their repasts.

Ind. But, should some hot-headed people take on themselves to eat sausages close to the king's nose, when the king is known to have an aversion to that food; should a mob of four or five thousand of them get together, each with his gridiron, to broil their sausages, and insult those who are against eating them?

Jap. In such a case they ought to be punished, as turbulent

drunkards. But we have obviated this danger; none but those who follow the royal cookery are capable of holding any employment; all others may, indeed, eat as they please, but this humour excludes them from some emoluments. Tumults are strictly forbidden, and instantly punished without mercy or mitigation: all quarrels at table are carefully restrained by a precept of our great Japanese cook, who has written, in the sacred language, "*Suti raho, cus flat, natus in usum lætitiæ scyphis pugnare tracum est:*" that is, "the intent of feasting is a sober and decent mirth; but to throw glasses at one another is savage."

Under these maxims we live very happily: our liberty is secured by our Taicosemas; we are every day growing more and more opulent: we have two hundred junks of the line, and are dreaded by our neighbours.

Ind. Why then has the pious rhymer, Recna, (son of the justly celebrated poet Recna,) said, in a didactic work, entitled *Grace*, and not the *Graces*,

> "Japan, once famed for intellectual light,
> Lies sunk in vision, chimera, and night."

Jap. That Recna is himself an arrant visionary. Does not this weak Indian know, that it is we who have taught his countrymen what light is! that it is to us India owes its knowledge of the course of the planets? that it is we who have made known to man the primitive laws of nature, and the doctrine of fluxions? To descend to things of more common use: by us, his countrymen were taught to build junks in mathematical proportion; they are beholden to us for those coverings of their legs which they call woven stockings. Now is it possible, that, after such admirable and useful inventions, we should be madmen? And if he have rhymed on the follies of others, does that make him the only wise man? Let him leave us to our own cookery, and, if he must be versifying, I would advise him to choose more poetical subjects.

This Recna, trusting to the visionaries of his country, has advanced, "That no good sauces were to be made, unless Brama himself, out of his particular favour, taught his favourites to make the sauce; that there was an infinite number of cooks who, with the best intentions and most earnest endeavours, were under an impossibility of making a ragout; Brama, from mere ill will, disabling them." Such stuff will not go down in Japan, where the following sentence is esteemed an indisputable truth:

> "God never acts by partial will, but by general laws."

Ind. What can be said? He is full of his country's prejudices, those of his party, and his own.

Jap. A world of prejudices indeed!

THE COUNTRY-PRIEST'S CATECHISM;

OR,

A Dialogue between a Parish Priest and his Friend.

Arist. So, my dear Theotinus, you are going to be a country parson?

Theot. Yes, I have had a small parish conferred on me, and I like it better than a larger: it is more suited both to my parts and my activity; having but one soul myself, the superintendence and direction of seventy thousand would certainly be too much for me; and I have ever wondered at the daringness of those who have taken on them the care of those immense districts. I cannot, in any tolerable measure, find myself equal to such a charge: a large flock really frightens me; but with a small one I may, perhaps, do some good. I have a smattering of the law; enough, with my careful endeavours, to prevent my poor parishioners from ruining one another by litigation. I am so far a physician as to prescribe to them in common cases; and I have so far looked into our best treatises on agriculture, that my advice may sometimes be of service to them. The lord of the manor and his lady are mighty good sort of people, and no devotees; they will second my endeavours to do good, so that I promise myself a very happy time of it; and that those among whom I am to live will not be the worse for my company.

Arist. But would you not like to have a wife? It would be a great comfort, after preaching, singing, confessing, communicating, baptizing, and burying, to be welcomed at your return home by an affectionate, cleanly, and virtuous wife: she would take care of your linen and person, divert you when in health, tend you in sickness, and make you the father of pretty children, the good education of whom would be of public advantage. I really pity your order, whose whole time is spent in the most valuable service of mankind, yet are debarred of a comfort and solacement so delectable, and, withal, so necessary.

Theot. The Greek church makes a point of encouraging marriage in their priests. The church of England, and the

Protestants, universally, act with the like wisdom; but the policy of the Latin church is quite opposite, and I must submit to it. Perhaps, in the present prevalence of a philosophical spirit, were a council convened, its decrees would be more favourable to human nature than those of the council of Trent; but till that happy time I must conform to the present laws; I am no stranger to its difficulties, but so many of my betters having taken the yoke on them, it is not for me to murmur.

Arist. You have a great share of learning, and are likewise master of a nervous eloquence. How do you intend to preach before a congregation of villagers?

Theot. As I would before kings. I will insist on morality, and never meddle with controversy. God forbid, that I should go about diving into concomitant grace, effectual grace, which may be resisted, sufficient grace, which does not suffice; or examining whether the angels who came to Lot had a body, or only feigned to eat. A thousand things there are which my congregation would not understand, nor I either. My endeavour shall be to make them good, and to be so myself; but I shall make no divines, nor be so myself more than shall be absolutely necessary.

Arist. You will make a good priest indeed! I think I must purchase a country house in your parish. But pray how will you manage confession?

Theot. Confession is highly beneficial; a strong curb to vice, and a very early institution. It was anciently practised at the celebration of all the mysteries of the church; and we have imitated and sanctified so devout an observance: it avails greatly, turning resentment and hatred into forgiveness and friendship; by it the petty rogues are induced to restore what they had stolen. I own it has also its inconveniences. There are too many indiscreet confessors, chiefly among the monks, who sometimes teach girls more fooleries than they learn among the young men. In confession there should be no particulars; it is no juridical interrogatory, but only a sinner's acknowledgment of his faults to the Supreme Being, before another sinner, who is soon to make the like acknowledgment. This salutary avowal is not made to gratify a frivolous curiosity.

Arist. And excommunications—will you ever proceed to such extremities?

Theot. No. Some rituals excommunicate grasshoppers, sorcerers, and stage-players. Grasshoppers I shall never exclude from my church, for they never come there; as little shall I excommunicate sorcerers, seeing there are none; and

stage-players, being authorised by the magistrates, and pensioned by his majesty, it would ill become me to brand them with infamy; nay, to be ingenuous, I can with pleasure read a play, when kept within the limits of decency; such, for instance, as Athaliah and the Misanthrope, which contain a great deal of moral instruction. The lord of our manor has some such pieces acted at his seat by young people of a theatrical turn: these exhibitions lead to virtue through the attraction of pleasure, form the taste, and greatly contribute to a just elocution. Now, for my part, in all this I see nothing but what is very innocent and even very useful; so that I intend, purely for my instruction, to be sometimes a spectator, but in a latticed box, to avoid giving offence to the weak.

Arist. The more you let me into your way of thinking, the more desirous am I of becoming your parishioner; but, one point remains which I think of very great importance. How will you do to hinder the peasants from fuddling on the holidays, which, you know, is their chief way of keeping festivals? Some, overcome by a liquid poison, are seen with their heads drooping almost to their knees, their hands dangling, their sight and hearing lost: in a condition very much beneath beasts, led home reeling by their lamenting wives, incapable of going to work the next day, often sick, and sometimes irrecoverably besotted. Others, inflamed by wine, raise quarrels, which soon come to furious blows; and these brutal scenes, a disgrace to human nature, have not seldom been known to end in a murder. It is a known truth, that the state loses more subjects by holidays than by wars: now, how will you eradicate this execrable custom out of your parish, or, at least, bring it under some just and prudent regulation?

Theot. I have a remedy at hand; I shall not only give them leave, but exhort them, to follow their occupations after divine service, and that I will take care to begin very early; for it is their being unemployed on such days which sends them to public-houses: on the working days we hear of no riot or bloodshed. Moderate labour is good both for soul and body: besides, the state wants their labour. Let us suppose, and the supposition is within bounds, five millions of men, one with another, doing ten penny-worth of work, and that these five millions of men are, by such a custom, rendered quite useless no less than thirty days in the year; consequently, the state is deprived of work to the value of thirty times five millions of tenpences. Now, God never enjoined drunkenness, nor such detrimental observance of festivals.

Arist. This will be reconciling devotion and business, and

both are of God's appointment: thus you serve God, and do good to your neighbour. But, amidst our ecclesiastical feuds, with which party will you side?

Theot. With none. Virtue never occasions any disputes, because it comes from God; all these heart-burnings are about opinions, which are the inventions of men.

Arist. Excellent! I wish all priests were like you.

THE GARDENER'S CATECHISM;

OR,

A dialogue between Bashaw TUCTAN, *and* KARPOS *the Gardener.*

Tuct. You sell your fruit, friend Karpos, very dear; however, it is pretty good. Pray what religion do you profess now?

Karp. Why, faith, my Lord Bashaw, I cannot very well tell you. When our little island (Samos) belonged to the Greeks, I remember I was ordered to say, that *Agiou pneuma* (the sacred Spirit) proceeded only from *tou patrou* (the Father). I was told to pray to God, standing upright, with my arms across, and was prohibited eating milk in Lent. When the Venetians came, our new Italian curate ordered me to say, that *Agiou pneuma* proceeded both from *tou patrou* and from *tou uiou* (the Son,) permitting me to eat milk, and making me pray on my knees. On the return of the Greeks, and their expelling the Venetians, I was obliged again to renounce *tou uiou*, and milk porridge. You have, at length, expelled the Greeks, and I hear you cry out as loud as you can, "*Allah illa Allah!*" For my part, I no longer know what I am; but I love God with all my heart, and sell my fruit very reasonably.

Tuct. You have some fine figs there.

Karp. At your service, my lord.

Tuct. They say you have a fine daughter too.

Karp. Yes, my lord Bashaw; but she is not at your service.

Tuct. Why so? Wretch!

Karp. Because I am an honest man: I may sell my figs, if I please; but I may not sell my daughter.

Tuct. And, pray, by what law are you allowed to sell one kind of fruit and not the other?

Karp. By the law of all honest gardeners. The honour of

my daughter is not my property, but hers. It is not, with us, a marketable commodity.

Tuct. You are, then, disloyal to your Bashaw.

Karp. Not at all: I am his faithful servant in every thing that is just, so long as he continue my master.

Tuct. And so, if your Greek patriarch should form a plot against me, and should order you, in the name of *tou patrou*, to enter into it, you would not have devotion enough to turn traitor? Ha!

Karp. Not I.

Tuct. And, pray, why should you refuse to obey your patriarch on such an occasion?

Karp. Because I have taken an oath of allegiance to you, as my bashaw; and I know that *tou patrou* does not command any one to engage in plots and conspiracies.

Tuct. I am glad of that, at least. But what, if the Greeks should retake the isle, and expel your bashaw; would you be faithful to me still?

Karp. What! when you are no longer my bashaw?

Tuct. What, then, would become of your oath of allegiance?

Karp. Something like my figs: you would not be any more the better for it. Craving your honour's pardon, it is certain, that if you were now dead, I should owe you no allegiance.

Tuct. The supposition is a little unpolite; but, however, your conclusion is true.

Karp. And would it not be the same, my lord, if you were expelled? for you would have a successor, to whom I must take a fresh oath of allegiance. Why should you require fidelity of me, when it would be no longer of use to you? That would be just as if you could not eat my figs yourself, and yet you would prevent my selling them to any body else.

Tuct. You are a reasoner, I see, and have your principles of action.

Karp. Ay, such as they are. They are but few, but they serve me; and, perhaps, if I had more, they would only puzzle me.

Tuct. I should like much to know your principles.

Karp. They are—to be a good husband, a good father, a good neighbour, and a good gardener. I go no farther, and hope, for the rest, that God will take every thing in good part, and have mercy on me.

Tuct. And do you think that he will show the same mercy to me, who am governor of this island of Samos?

Karp. And, pray, how do you think I should know that? Is

it for me to conjecture how God Almighty behaves to bashaws? That is an affair between you and him, which I do not intermeddle with in any shape. All that I believe of the matter is, that, if you be as honest a bashaw as I am a gardener, God will be very good to you.

Tuct. By Mahomet, I like this idolater very well! Farewell, friend: Allah be your protection!

Karp. Thank ye, my lord bashaw! God have mercy upon you.

CERTAIN—CERTAINTY.

"How old may your friend Christopher be?" "Twenty-eight. I have seen both his contract of marriage, and the register of his birth: I have known him from a child—twenty-eight is his age—I am as certain of it as certain can be."

Soon after this man's answer, who was so sure of what he had said, and to twenty others, in confirmation of the same thing, I happened to be informed, that, for private reasons, and by an odd contrivance, the register of Christopher's birth was antedated. They to whom I had spoken, knowing nothing of this, are still in the greatest certainty of what is not!

Had you, in Copernicus's time, asked all the world, "Did the sun rise, did the sun set, to-day?" they would, one and all, have answered, "That is a certainty: we are fully certain of it." Thus they were certain, and yet mistaken!

Witchcraft, divinations, and possessions, were, for a long time, universally accounted the most certain things in the world. What numberless crowds have seen all those fine things, and have been certain of them; but, at present, such certainty begins to lose its credit.

A yong man, just entered on geometry, and gone no farther than the definition of triangles, calls on me: "Are you not certain," said I to him, "that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles?" He answers me, that, so far from being certain, he has not a clear idea of the proposition: on which, I demonstrate it to him; this, indeed, makes him very certain of it, and he will be so as long as he lives.

Here is a certainty very different from the former: they were only probabilities, which, on being searched into, are found to be errors: but mathematical certainty is immutable and eternal.

I exist, I think, I feel pain: is all this as certain as a geometrical truth? Yes. And why? Because these truths are

proved by the same principle, that a thing cannot, at the same time, be and not be. I cannot, at one and the same time, exist and not exist, feel and not feel. A triangle cannot have and not have a hundred and eighty degrees, the sum of two right angles.

Thus, the physical certainty of my existence and my sensation, and mathematical certainty, are of a like validity, though differing in kind.

But this is by no means applicable to the certainty founded on appearances, or the unanimous relations of men.

How, say you, are not you certain that there is such a city as Pekin? Have you not some Pekin manufactures? Are you not certain of the existence of Pekin, from the accounts of persons of different nations and of different opinions, writing violently against each other, when preaching the truth in that city? I answer, that it is highly probable there was such a city at that time, but I would not wager my life on its existence: whereas, at any time will I stake my life, that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles.

The *Dictionaire Encyclopedique* has a very droll assertion, that should all Paris say, that Marshal Saxe is risen from the dead, a man ought to be as sure and certain of it, as he is, that the Marshal gained the battle of Fontenoy, on hearing all Paris say so. Excellent reasoning! I believe all Paris, when it tells me a thing morally possible: must I, therefore, believe all Paris, when it tells me a thing which is both morally and naturally impossible?

The author of this article, I suppose, was in a bantering strain; and the writer, against whom it was written, probably means no more by his extatic applauses at the end of it.

CHAIN OF EVENTS.

It is an old supposition, that all events are linked together by an invincible fatality. This is destiny, which Homer makes superior to Jupiter himself. This sovereign of gods and man, frankly declares, that he cannot save his son, Sarpedon, from dying at the time appointed. Sarpedon was born at the very instant that he was to be born; at any other, he could not be born; so he could not die any where but before Troy; he could be buried no where but in Lycia: his body was, at the destined time, to produce herbs and pulse, which where to be changed into the substance of some Lycians. His heirs were to institute a new form of government in his dominions; this

new form was to affect the neighbouring kingdoms, and this put those who bordered on these neighbouring kingdoms on new measures of peace or war. Thus the fate of the whole earth came gradually to be determined by that of Sarpedon, which depended on another event, and this, by a chain of other events, was connected with the origin of things.

Had only one of these transactions been differently disposed, it would have caused a different universe; and that the present universe should exist, and not exist, is an impossibility: it was not possible, therefore, for Jupiter, with all his omnipotence, to save his son's life.

This system of necessity and fatality, has, according to Leibnitz, been struck out by himself, under the appellation of *sufficient reason*; but it is, in reality, of very ancient date: that no effect is without a cause, and that often the least cause produces the greatest effect, is what the world is not to be taught at this time of day.

My Lord Bolingbroke owns, that the trivial quarrel between the Dutchess of Marlborough and Mrs. Masham, put him upon making the separate treaty between Queen Anne and Lewis XIV. This treaty brought on the peace of Utrecht. This peace settled Philip V. on the Spanish throne. Philip V. dispossessed the house of Austria, of Naples and Sicily. Thus the Spanish prince, who is now king of Naples, evidently owes his sovereignty to Mrs. Masham. He would not have had it, perhaps he would not so much as have been born, had the Dutchess of Marlborough behaved with due complaisance, towards the Queen of England. His existence at Naples depended on a few follies committed at the court of London. Inquire into the situation of all the nations on the globe, and they are all derived from a chain of events, apparently quite unconnected with any one thing, and connected with every thing. In this immense machine, all is wheel-work, pully, cords, and springs.

It is the same in the physical system; a wind blowing from the south of Africa, and the austral seas, brings with it part of the African atmosphere, which falls down again in rain among the valleys of the Alps, and these rains fructify our lands. Again, the northern winds waft our vapours among the negroes; that, we benefit Guinea, and are benefited by it: and this chain reaches from one end of the universe to the other.

But the truth of this principle, I think, has been extended to a strange excess. Some insist, that there is no atom, ever so minute, but its motion contributes to the present disposition of

the whole world; and that every petty incident, whether among men or brutes, is an essential link in the great chain of fatality.

Let us understand one another: every effect has evidently its cause, recurring, from cause to cause, up to the abyss of eternity; but every cause has not its effect traced forward to the end of time. That all events proceed from others, I own; as the past has brought forth the present; the present produces the future; every thing has fathers, but every thing has not always children. This cannot be better elucidated, than by a genealogical tree: every family is deduced from Adam, but many of its branches die without issue.

The events of this world are not without their genealogical tree: the inhabitants of Gaul and Spain are indisputably descended from Gomer, and the Russians from Magog, his younger brother; for so it is said, in many huge books; to whom we are, of course, indebted, for the sixty thousand Russians, now in arms, towards the confines of Pomerania, and for the sixty thousand French in the neighbourhood of Frankfort. But I do not see how Magog's spitting to the right or the left near Mount Caucasus, or his making two or three arches on the inside of a well, or his laying on his right or his left side, could have any considerable influence in the Czarina Elizabeth's resolution of sending an army to the assistance of Maria Theresa, empress of the Romans. That my dog dreamed, or did not dream, in its sleep, has any relation to the grand Mogul's concerns, is what I cannot see into.

It must be considered that all things are not full in nature; and that every motion is not communicated successively, so as to be continued round the world. On throwing into water a body of equal density, you easily conceive, that, in some short time, the motion of such body, and that which it has caused in the water, will cease; motion is lost and recovered: thus, the motion which might have been produced by Magog's spitting in a well, can have no affinity with what is now doing in Russia and Prussia: thus, the present events are not issued from all the former events: they have their direct lines; but a thousand petty collateral lines do not, in the least, conduce to them. I say it again, every being has its fathers, but every being has not children. I may, possibly, enlarge on this head, when I come to speak of DESTINY.

CHAIN OF CREATED BEINGS.

On my first reading Plato, I was charmed with his gradation of beings, rising from the slightest atom to the supreme essence. Such a scale struck me with admiration; but, on a closer survey of it, this august phantom disappeared, as, formerly, ghosts used to hie away at the crowing of the cock.

Fancy is, at first, ravished, in beholding the imperceptible ascent from senseless matter to organized bodies, from plants to zoophytes, from zoophytes to animals, from these to men, from men to genii, from these æthereal genii to immaterial essence; and, lastly, numberless different orders of these essences, ascending through a succession of increasing beauties and perfections, to God himself. The devout are mightily taken with this hierarchy, as representing the pope and his cardinals, followed by the archbishops and bishops, and then by the reverend train of rectors, vicars, unbenificed priests, deacons, and subdeacons; then come the regulars, and the capuchins bring up the rear.

From God to his most perfect creatures the distance is somewhat greater than between the pope and the dean of a sacred college: this dean may come to be pope, whereas the most perfect of the genii never can be God. Infinitude lies between God and him.

Neither does this chain, this pretended gradation, exist any longer in vegetables and animals, some species of plants and animals being totally extinguished. The murex is not to be found; it was forbidden to eat the griffin and ixion, which, whatever Bochart may say, have not, for ages past, been in nature: where, then, is the chain?

Though no species may have been lost, yet, it is manifest they may be destroyed, for lions and rhinoceroses are growing very scarce.

It is far from being improbable, that there have been breeds of men, now no longer existing; but I grant that they all have been preserved, as truly as the whites, the blacks, the Caffres, to whom nature has given a membraneous apron, hanging from their belly half down their thighs; the Samoiedes, where one of the nipple's of the women's breasts is of a fine ebony, &c.

Is there not a manifest chasm between the monkey and man? Is it not easy to conceive a two-legged animal without feathers, endowed with understanding, but without speech or human shape, which we might tame and instruct, so that it

should answer to our signs, and serve us for many purposes; and between this new species and that of man, might not others be contrived!

Further, divine Plato, you quarter in the firmament a series of celestial substances. As for us, we believe the existence of some of these substances, being taught so by our faith. But what grounds can you have for such a belief? It is to be supposed, that you never conversed with Socrates's genius; and the good man Heres, who kindly rose from the dead, purely to communicate to you the mysteries of the other world, did not say a word to you about such substances.

This supposed chain is not less imperfect in the sensible universe.

What gradation, pray, is there between those planets of yours? The moon is forty times smaller than our globe. In your journey from the moon, through the ether, you meet with Venus, which is nearly as big as the earth. Whence you come to Mercury, turning in an ellipsis, which is very different from Venus's orbit. He is twenty-seven times smaller than our planet, and the sun is a million times larger. Mars is five times smaller, and performs his orbit in about two years. Jupiter, his neighbour, in about twelve years. Saturn takes up about thirty years; and yet, though the most distant of any, he is not so large as Jupiter! Amidst these disproportions, what becomes of the gradations?

And, then, how can you think, that in such immense voids, there can be a chain, whereby every thing is connected? If such a chain there be, it is certainly that discovered by Newton, and by which all the globes of the planetary world gravitate towards each other, throughout these immense spaces.

Oh! Plato, thou so much admired: your writings swarm with fables and fictions; and the Cassiterides, where, in your time, men went quite naked, have produced a philosopher, who has taught the world truths, as great and sublime, as your notions were erroneous and puerile!

CHARACTER,

Comes from a Greek word, signifying impression and graving: it is what nature has engraven in us; can we, then, efface it? This is a weighty question. A mishapen nose, cat's eyes, or any deformity in the features, may be hidden with a mask; and can I do more with the character which nature has

given me? A man, naturally impetuous and passionate, comes before Francis I. king of France, to complain of an outrage: the prince's aspect, the respectful behaviour of the courtiers, the very place, make a powerful impression on him. With eyes cast down, a soft voice, and every sign of humility, he presents his petition, so that one would think he was naturally as mild and polite, as are, at least, at that time, the courtiers; among whom he is even out of countenance: but if Francis I. be a physiognomist, he will easily discover, by the sullen fire in his eye, by the straining of the muscles in his face, and the compression of his lips, that this man is not really so mild as he is obliged to appear. The same man follows him to Pavia, is taken with him, and confined in the same prison at Madrid: here the impression, made on him by Francis's aspect and grandeur, ceases; he grows familiar with the object of his respect. One day, drawing on the king's boots, and doing it wrong, the king, soured by his misfortunes, takes pet; on this, my gentleman, shaking off all respect for his majesty, throws the boots out of the window!

Sixtus Quintus was naturally petulant, obstinate, haughty, violent, revengeful, and arrogant; this character, however, seems quite mollified amidst the trials of his noviciate. But, no sooner has he attained to some consideration in his order, than he flies into a passion with his superior, and severely belabours him with his fists, till he lays him sprawling. On his being made inquisitor at Venice, his insolence becomes intolerable. On his promotion to the purple, he is immediately seized with the *rabbia papale*, which so far gets the better of his natural character, that he affects obscurity, mortification, humility, and a very weak state of health. At length he is chosen pope; and now the spring recovers its whole elasticity, which had been so long under restraint: his real character now developes itself; and never was a more haughty and despotic sovereign known.

Nature expell'd, she soon again returns.

Religion and morality lay a check on the force of the natural temper, but cannot extirpate it. A sot, when in a convent, reduced to half a pint of cyder at each meal, will no longer be seen drunk, but his love of wine will ever be the same.

Age weakens the natural character; it is a tree which produces only some degenerate fruits, still they are of one and the same nature. It grows knotty, and over-run with moss, and worm-eaten; but, amidst all this, it continues what it was, whether oak or pear tree. Could a man change his character,

he would give himself one; he would be superior to nature. Can we give ourselves any thing? What have we, that we have not received? Endeavour to rouse the indolent to a constant activity; to freeze the impetuous into an apathy; to give a taste for poetry and music, to one who has neither taste nor ear; you may as well go about washing the blackamoor white, or giving sight to one born blind. We only improve, polish, and conceal, what nature has put into us: we have nothing of our own putting.

A country-gentleman is told, there are too many fish in that pond, they will never thrive; your meadows are crowded with sheep, they have not grass sufficient, they fall away to nothing. Some time after this advice, it falls out, that the pikes devour half the carps, and the wolves thin his meadows, so that what sheep are left fatten apace. Shall he pique himself on his management? Well, this country-gentleman is no other than myself: one of thy passions has swallowed up the rest, and thou boastest of self-conquest. How very few among us, who may not be compared to that decrepid general ninety years old, who, meeting some young officers making a little free with girls, said to them quite in a passion, "Fie, gentlemen; what do you mean? do I set you any such example?"

CHINA.

We go to fetch earth from China, as if we had none; stuffs, as if we were without stuffs; a small herb to infuse into water, as if our climates did not afford simples. In return, which is a very commendable zeal, we are for converting the Chinese; but we should not offer to dispute their antiquity, and tell them that they are idolaters; for, indeed, what would be thought of a capuchin, who, after being kindly entertained at a seat of the Montmorenci's, should go about to persuade them, that they were but newly-made nobles, like secretaries of state, and accuse them of being idolaters, having observed in this seat, two or three of the constable's statues, which they highly value?

The celebrated Wolff, mathematical professor in the university of Halle, once made a judicious oration on the Chinese philosophers: he praised this ancient race of men, though different from us in the beard, eyes, nose, ears, and reasoning: he commended the Chinese, as adoring one Supreme God, and cherishing virtue; thus doing justice to the emperors of

China, to the Kolaos, to the tribunals, and to the literati: the justice which the bonzes deserve, is of a different kind.

This Wolff, you must know, drew to Halle a great resort of scholars from all nations; there was in the same university a professor of divinity, named Engel, who had scarcely a single scholar; this man, exasperated at starving with cold in his empty auditory, conceived a design, and, to be sure, very justly, to ruin the professor of mathematics, and, as usual with such men, he charged him with not believing in God.

Some European writers, utter strangers to China, had affirmed that all the men, of any note or consideration at Pekin, were atheists: now, Wolff had commended the Pekin philosophers; Wolff, therefore, was an atheist: envy and hatred never formed better syllogisms. Yet this argument, with the help of a cabal and a protector, appeared so conclusive to the king of the country, that he sent the mathematician a dilemma in form, the import of which was, either to leave Halle in twenty-four hours, or be hanged. As Wolff always reasoned very justly, he immediately left the city; but, by his departure, the king lost two or three hundred thousand crowns a year, which the great number of that philosopher's scholars brought into the kingdom.

May this be a document to sovereigns not always to lend an ear to calumny, and sacrifice a great man to the rancour of a blockhead!

Let us return to China.

What do we mean here, at the farthest part of the west, thus virulently to dispute, whether Fohi, emperor of China, were the fourteenth emperor or not; or whether he lived three thousand, or two thousand nine hundred years, before our common era? I should laugh at two Irishmen wrangling, at Dublin, about who, in the twelfth century, was the owner of the estate which I now hold! Is it not clear that they should be determined by me, as having the writings in my hands? The case, I think, is similar, with regard to the first emperors of China; the tribunals of the country are the best judges.

After all your important altercations about the fourteen princes who reigned before Fohi, the result will be, that China was then very well peopled, and had laws, and a political constitution. Now let me ask you, whether a nation living in towns, and having laws and sovereigns, do not imply a prodigious antiquity? Consider the time that must have passed, and the concurrence of circumstances, before iron could be found out in the mines, and then fitted for agriculture; and,

likewise, before the invention of the shuttle, and of all other trades.

Some, who play the fool with their pens, have contrived a whimsical sort of calculation; the Jesuit, Petau, in his sagacious computation, at the epocha of only two hundred and eighty-five years after the deluge, gives the earth a hundred times more inhabitants than can be supposed to be in it at present. Cumberland and Whiston are no less ridiculous in their calculations. Good men! had they only consulted the registers of our American colonies, they would have been astonished. They would have seen how very slowly the human species multiplies; and very often, so far from increasing, it diminishes.

Let us, therefore, who are but of yesterday, descendants from the Celts; who have but just cleared our wild countries from the forests with which they were over-run; let us, I say, leave the Chinese and the Indians in the quiet enjoyment of their fine climate and their antiquity; especially, let us forbear calling the emperor of China, and the soubah of Decan, idolaters. Neither are we to be infatuated with Chinese merit. The constitution of their empire is, indeed, the best in the whole world, the only one which is entirely modelled from paternal power (the mandarins, however, chastise their children very severely;) the only one, where the governor of a province is punished, if, at the expiration of his office, the people do not show their approbation of his conduct by loud acclamations; the only one which has instituted prizes for virtue, whilst, every where else, the laws only punish vice; the only one whose laws have recommended themselves to its conquerors, whilst we are still swayed by the customs of our conquerors—the Burgundians, the Franks, and the Goths. But it must be owned, that the commonalty, who are bonze-ridden, are no less knavish than ours; that foreigners are extremely imposed on, as amongst us; that, in sciences, the Chinese are two hundred years behind us; that, like us, they have a thousand ridiculous notions; that they give credit to talismen and judicial astrology, which was also our case for a long time.

It must further be owned, that they were amazed at our thermometer, at our way of freezing liquors by salt-petre, and with Torricelli and Otho Guerie's experiments, just as we ourselves were on our first seeing those physical exhibitions: further, their physicians do not cure mortal distempers, any more than ours; and the slighter illnesses nature alone cures there, as here. Notwithstanding all this, the Chinese, four

thousand years ago, when we did not know our letters, were masters of all that is essentially useful in that knowledge, which we so much value ourselves on at present.

CHRISTIANITY.

HISTORICAL DISQUISITIONS CONCERNING CHRISTIANITY.

In vain, have several of the learned expressed their astonishment, that in the historian Josephus, they meet with no trace of Jesus Christ, the little passage relating to him in that history, being now universally given up as interpolated. Yet Josephus's father must have been an eye-witness of Jesus's miracles. This historian was of the priestly lineage; and, being related to queen Mariamne, Herod's wife, is minutely particular on all that prince's proceedings, yet wholly silent as to the life and death of Christ. Though neither concealing nor palliating Herod's cruelties, he says not a word about his ordering the children to be massacred, on an information that a king of the Jews was just born. According to the Greek calendar, the number of children put to death on that occasion, amounted to fourteen thousand.

Of all the cruelties ever committed by all the tyrants that ever lived, this was the most horrible: a like instance is not to be found in history.

Yet the best writer the Jews ever had, the only one of any account with the Romans and Greeks, makes no manner of mention of a transaction so very extraordinary, and so very doubtful. He says not a word of the new star which had appeared in the east at the Saviour's nativity; though a phenomenon so singular could not escape the knowledge of such an accurate historian as Josephus: he is likewise silent as to the darkness which, at noon day, covered the whole earth for the space of three hours, whilst the Saviour was on the cross; the opening of the tombs at that awful time; and the number of the just who rose from the dead.

It is not less a matter of wonder to the learned, that these prodigies are not taken notice of by any Roman historian, though they happened in the reign of Tiberius, under the very eyes of a Roman governor and garrison, who naturally would have sent the emperor and senate a circumstantial account of the most miraculous event ever heard of. Rome itself must, for three hours, have been involved in thick darkness; and,

surely, such a prodigy would have been noted in the annals of Rome, and those of all other nations. But God, I suppose, would not allow that such divine things should be committed to writing by profane hands.

The same learned persons likewise meet with some difficulties in the evangelical history. They observe that, in St. Matthew, Jesus Christ says to the Scribes and Pharisees, that upon them should come all the innocent blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to that of Zachariah, the son of Barac, whom they slew between the temple and the altar.

In all the history of the Hebrews, say they, we meet with no such person as Zachariah, killed in the temple, before the coming of the Messiah, nor in his time; but Josephus, in his history of the siege of Jerusalem, (chap. xix. book iv.) mentions a Zachariah, the son of Barachiah, who was killed in the middle of the temple, by the faction of the Zelotes. This has given rise to a suspicion, that St. Matthew's gospel was not written till after the taking of Jerusalem by Titus. But, if we consider the infinite difference there must be, between books divinely inspired, and such as are merely human, all these doubts, difficulties, and objections, immediately vanish. It was God's pleasure that his birth, life, and death, should be shrouded in a cloud of respectable darkness. His ways in all things are different from ours.

The learned are also at a great loss to reconcile the difference of the two genealogies of Christ. In St. Matthew, Joseph's father is Jacob, Jacob's is Matthan, Matthan's is Eleazar; whereas St. Luke says, that Joseph was the son of Heli, Heli of Matthat, Matthat of Levi, Levi of Janna, &c. They cannot reconcile the fifty-six ancestors in Christ's genealogy from Abraham, mentioned by Luke, to the two-and-forty different ancestors in the genealogy from the same Abraham, given by St. Matthew; and they are shocked, that Matthew, mentioning forty-two generations, enumerates no more than forty-one.

They likewise are at a stand about Jesus not being the son of Joseph, but of Mary. They farther have their doubts concerning the MIRACLES OF OUR SAVIOUR, and quote St. Austin, St. Hilary and others, who interpret the account of these miracles in a mystic and allegorical sense; as the cursing and withering the fig-tree, for not bearing figs when it was not the time of figs; the sending the devils into the swine, in a country where those creatures were not permitted: the turning the water into wine, towards the end of an entertainment, when

the guests were already heated with liquor. But all these cavils of the learned are put to silence by faith, whose merit is enhanced by these difficulties. The scope of this article is purely to follow the historical clue, and give a just and precise idea of those facts, which nobody offers to controvert.

First, Jesus was born under the Mosaic law; in conformity to this law, he was circumcised; he conformed to all its precepts; he kept all its feasts, and preached only morality; he made no revelation of the mystery of his incarnation; he never told the Jews that he was born of a virgin; he received John's benediction, being baptized by him in the river Jordan, a ceremony to which great numbers of Jews submitted; he said nothing about the seven sacraments, nor did he institute, in his life-time, the ecclesiastical hierarchy. He concealed from his contemporaries that he was the Son of God, generated from all eternity, consubstantial with God; and that the Holy Ghost proceeded from the Father and the Son; he did not inform them, that his person was composed of two natures and two wills: these great mysteries were, in after-times, to be declared to man by persons illuminated by the light of the Holy Ghost. During his whole life he did not, in the least, deviate from the law of his forefathers. He showed himself to the world only as a just man, acceptable to God, persecuted by envious doctors, and condemned to die by prejudiced magistrates. It was his pleasure that all the rest should be done by the holy church which he established.

Josephus, in the twelfth chapter of his history, mentions an austere sect of Jews, then recently founded by one Judas Galileus, "They make light," says he, "of all earthly evils. Such is their resolution, that they brave tortures, and, on an honourable motive, prefer death to life. They have chosen to be burnt, to be slain, and even their bones to be broken, rather than utter the least word against their legislator, or eat any forbidden food."

This character seems to belong to the Judaites, and not to the Essenes; for Josephus's words are, "Judas was the author of a new sect, totally different from the other three; that is, the Sadducees, the Pharisees, and the Essenes." And further on he says, "They are, by nation, Jews; they live in a close union among themselves, and hold all sensuality to be vicious and sinful." Now the natural import of this phrase, shows the author to be speaking of the Judaites.

However it be, these Judaites were known before Christ's disciples began to make any considerable figure in the world.

The Therapeutes were a society differing both from the Essenes and the Judaites, and had some affinity to the Indian Gymnosophists and Bramins. "They have," says Philo, "impulses of heavenly love, by which they kindle into all the enthusiasm of the Coribantes and the Bacchanalians, and are raised to that state of contemplation after which they aspire. This sect had its rise in Alexandria, where the Jews were very numerous, and spread exceedingly throughout Egypt."

John the Baptist's disciples likewise spread a little in Egypt, but especially in Syria and Arabia; Asia Minor also was not without them. The Acts of the Apostles, chap. xix. says, that St. Paul met with several at Ephesus; and asked them, "Have you received the Holy Ghost?" they answered, "We have not so much as heard that there is a Holy Ghost." He inquired, "What baptism then have you received?" They replied, "The baptism of John." For some little time after Jesus' death, there were several different sects and societies among the Jews;—the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Essenes, the Judaites, the Therapeutes, the disciples of John, and the disciples of Christ, whose little flock God led by paths unknown to human wisdom.

Believers first had the name of Christians at Antioch, about the sixtieth year of our common era; but, as we shall see in the sequel, they were known in the Roman empire under other appellations. Before that time they distinguished themselves only by the name of Brothers, Saints, and Faithful. Thus God, who had come down on earth to be a pattern of meekness and self-denial, founded his church on very weak, and apparently mean beginnings, and kept it in the same humble and mortified condition in which it pleased him to be born. All the first believers were of low parentage, obscure men, working with their own hands. The apostle, Paul, intimates that he supported himself by making tents. St. Peter raised to life Dorcas, a sempstress, who used to make garments for the brethren: and the believers of Joppa used to hold their meetings in the house of one Simon, a tanner, as may be seen in chap. ix. of the Acts of the Apostles.

The faithful secretly spread themselves in Greece, and some went from thence to Rome, mingling with the Jews, to whom the Jews allowed a synagogue. At first they continued with the Jews, and so far practised circumcision, that, as we have elsewhere observed, the first fifteen bishops of Jerusalem were every one circumcised.

The apostle Paul, on taking with him Timothy, whose fa-

ther was a Gentile, circumcised him himself, at the little town of Lystra; but Titus, his other disciple, would not submit to that ceremony. The disciples of Jesus continued in unity with the Jews, till Paul bringing strangers into the temple, the Jews raised a persecution against him, and charged him with an intent of subverting the Mosaic law by the doctrine of Jesus Christ. It was in order to clear himself from this accusation, that James proposed to Paul his having his head shaved, and purifying himself in the temple, along with four Jews, who had made a vow to be shaved: "Them take, and purify thyself with them," says James to him, (Acts, xxi.) "that all may know, that all things whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing, and that thou keepest the law of Moses."

This did not, in the least, abate the charge of impiety and heresy against Paul, and his trial was of some continuance; but the very articles for which he was indicted, evidently show, that he was come to Jerusalem, to observe the Jewish rites.

His own words to Titus (Acts, xxv.) are, "Neither against the law of the Jews, nor against the temple, have I offended any thing at all."

The apostles promulgated Jesus Christ as a Jew, an observer of the Jewish law, and sent by God to enforce the observance of it. "Circumcision verily profiteth," says the apostle Paul, (Rom. ii.) "if thou keepest the law; but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision. If the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision? He is a Jew, who is one inwardly."

When this apostle speaks of Jesus Christ in his epistles, he does not make known the ineffable mystery of his consubstantiality with God. "We are," says he, (Rom. v.) "delivered by him from the wrath of God; the gift of God is come to us through the grace imparted to one only man, Christ Jesus: Death has reigned by the sin of one man, and the just shall reign in life by one man, Jesus Christ." And in chap. viii. "We are heirs of God, and co-heirs with Christ." And in chap. xvi. "To God, who alone is wise, be honour and glory, through Jesus Christ." And in Cor. i. 3. "Ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." And in 1 Cor. xv. 27, "All things are subject to him, God certainly excepted, who hath subjected all things to him."

Difficulties arise in explaining this passage in the Philippians: "Let nothing be done through vain glory, but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem others better than himself; let

this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." The sense of the passage seems very well set forth in a most valuable monument of antiquity, a letter from the churches of Vienne and Lyons, written in the year 117; part of it turns on the modesty of some of the faithful: "They would not," says the letter, "take on themselves the august title of martyrs, for a few tribulations, imitating Jesus Christ, who, bearing the likeness or image of God, did not think the title of God's equal belonged to him." Origen, likewise, in his Commentary on John, says, "Christ's greatness has appeared more resplendent in his humiliation, than if he had thought it no robbery to be God's equal." And, in reality, the contrary explication is a palpable inconsistency. What can be meant by, "Believe others your betters; imitate Jesus, who thought it no robbery, no usurpation, to make himself God's equal?" This would be a flat contradiction, overthrowing what precedes; it is giving an example of ambition, for a pattern of meekness, it is a trespass against common sense.

Thus it was, that the wisdom of the apostles founded the infant church, and this wisdom was not discomposed by the contest between the apostles Peter, James, and John, on one side; and Paul on the other. It happened at Antioch: the apostle Peter, alias Cephas, alias Simon Barjona, used to eat with the Gentile converts, overlooking the ceremonies of the law, and the distinction of aliments. He and Barnabas, together with other disciples, made no manner of scruple to eat pork, things strangled, or animals which divide the hoof, but do not chew the cud; but a number of Jewish Christians coming there, St. Peter associated with them, returning to his former abstinence from forbidden meats, and the strict observance of the Mosaic ceremonies.

This procedure has an air of discretion; he was unwilling to give offence to his Jewish brethren; but St. Paul declared against him with some harshness: "I withstood him," says he, "to his face; for he was to blame," Gal. ii.

This quarrel appears the more extraordinary in St. Paul, who, as having at first been a persecutor, should have shown more temper; besides, he himself had gone into the temple at Jerusalem, to sacrifice, had circumcised his disciple Timothy, and had performed those Jewish rites, for which he now upbraids Cephas. St. Jerome will have it, that this bickering between Paul and Cephas, was only a feint. In his first homily, tom. iii. he says, that they acted like two pleaders at the bar, who grow warm, and use keen language, only that their

clients may have the higher opinion of them; that Peter Cephas, being appointed to preach to the Jews, and the Gentiles being Paul's department, they affected a quarrel; Paul to gain the Gentiles, and Peter to gain the Jews. But St. Austin can, by no means, relish this opinion. "I am sorry," says he, in his epistle to Jerome, "that so great a man should patronise a falsity, a *patronum mendacii.*"

Further, if Peter were appointed apostle to the Jews, and Paul to the Gentiles, it is very probable that Peter never came to Rome. The Acts of the Apostles makes no mention of Peter's journey into Italy.

However that be, about the year sixty of our era, the Christians began to separate themselves from the Jewish communion; and this was what drew on them such censure, invective, and persecution, from the synagogues of Rome, Greece, Egypt, and Asia. Their Jewish brethren not only charged them with impiety and atheism, but formally excommunicated them three times in their synagogues, even on the Sabbath-day. Still God upheld them amidst all their trials and sufferings.

Several churches were gradually formed, and before the end of the first century, the separation between the Jews and Christians became total: but the Roman government knew nothing of this schism; neither the senate nor the emperors of Rome concerning themselves about the wranglings of a little party, which, till then, God had conducted in obscurity, and was raising by insensible degrees.

Let us take a view of the state of the religion of the Roman empire at that time. Mysteries and expiations were in vogue almost all over the earth. Though the emperors and grandees, and philosophers, secretly made a jest of those mysteries, still it behoved them outwardly to conform to the public worship, lest they should irritate the people, who, in religious affairs, give law to their betters; or rather these, to chain them the faster, appear to wear the same chains: Cicero himself was initiated into the Eleusinian mysteries. The principal tenet, set forth in these mysteries and splendid festivals, was the knowledge of one only God; and, it must be owned, that Paganism has nothing more pious, and, in every respect, more admirable, than the prayers and hymns used in those mysteries, and of which fragments are still remaining.

The Christians, likewise, worshipping only one God, paved the way to their success in converting Gentiles. Even some philosophers of Plato's sect became Christians: hence it is,

that the fathers of the church, for the three first centuries, were all Platonics.

The inconsiderate zeal of some did not affect the fundamental truths. St. Justin, one of the first fathers, is censured for saying, in his commentary on Isaiah, that the saints should reign a thousand years on the earth, in the full enjoyment of all sensual delights; he has been blamed for a position, in his Apology for Christianity, that God, after making the earth, left the care of it to angels; that these fell in love with the women; and that the issue of this passion are the devils. Lactantius, and other fathers, have been condemned for inventing Sybilline oracles; he affirmed, that the Sybilla Erythrea made four Greek verses, of which the literal interpretation is; "He shall feed five thousand men, in the desert, with five loaves and two fishes; and shall fill twelve baskets with the fragments."

It has, likewise, been made a crime to the first Christians, that they were for palming on the world some acrostics, as written by an old Sybil, all beginning with the initial letters of the name of Jesus Christ, each in its order.

But, notwithstanding this zeal of some Christians, which was not according to knowledge, the church, under a divine superintendence, was daily increasing. At first, the Christians used to celebrate their mysteries in lonely houses and taverns, and in the night-time; from which practice, according to Minutius Felix, they got the appellation of Lucifugaces; Philo calls them Gesseans; but, during the four first centuries, they were most commonly known to the Gentiles by the name of Galileans and Nazarenes; that of Christians has, however, become most general.

Neither the hierarchy, nor the rights and usages, were established all at once: the apostolic times were different from the succeeding. St. Paul, in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, directs them, that, in a public assembly of the brethren, whether circumcised or uncircumcised, when several prophets were for speaking, only two or three should speak; and, in the mean time, if any one had a revelation, the prophet who had begun to speak was to be silent.

It is owing to this custom of the primitive church, that, to this day, some Christian sects hold their assemblies without any hierarchy. Every one was then allowed to speak in the church, women excepted; what we call the sacred mass, and celebrate in the morning, was the Lord's Supper, originally administered in the evening, these usages altered as the church gathered strength. A more extended society required more

regulations, and the prudent pastors conformed to times and places.

According to St. Jerome and Eusebius, when the churches had received a form, they gradually came to consist of five different classes: the Superintendents, Episcopi, whence are derived the bishops; the elders of the society; Presbyteroi, the priests, ministers, or deacons; the Pistoi, believers, or initiated, that is, the baptized, who were admitted to the Agapæs, or feasts of charity; and the Catechumens and Energumenes, who were candidates for baptism. None of these five orders were distinguished by any particular vesture or garb, nor was any of them bound to celibacy; witness Tertullian's dedicating a book to his wife; witness the example of the apostles. No painting or sculpture was seen in their assemblies during the first three centuries. The Christians used carefully to conceal their books from the Pagans, and trusted none with them except the initiated; the Catechumens were not permitted to say the Lord's Prayer.

But what most distinguished the Christians, and continued down to our times, was the power of driving out devils by the sign of the cross. Origen, in his treatise against Celsus, owns, Numb. 133, that Antinous, who had been deified by the emperor Adrian, wrought miracles in Egypt, by charms and prestiges; but the devils, says he, quit the body of the possessed, on the bare pronunciation of the name of Jesus.

Tertullian goes still further, and from the remote part of Africa where he was, says, in chap. xxxiii. of his Apologeticon, "If your gods do not, in the presence of a true Christian, own themselves to be devils, we freely consent that you put that Christian to death." Can there be a more evident demonstration?

Jesus Christ, indeed, sent his apostles to drive out devils. The Jews, likewise, in his time, had this power; for, when Jesus had relieved some demoniacs, and sent the devils into the body of a herd of swine, and performed many other such cures, the Pharisees said, "It is by the power of Belzebub he drives out devils:" but Jesus answered, "If I drive them out by Belzebub, by whom do your sons drive them out?" That the Jews boasted of such a power, is indisputable; they had exorcist and exorcisms. On these occasions, they called on the name of the God of Jacob and of Abraham; and consecrated herbs were put up the demoniac's nose. Josephus gives some account of these ceremonies. This power over the devils was taken away from the Jews, and transferred to

the Christians, who, for some time past, seem likewise to have lost it.

This exorcising power comprehended that of preventing or defeating magical operations; for magic was ever in repute among all nations. All the fathers of the church bear witness to it. St. Justin owns, in his Apologetic, book iii. that the souls of the deceased are often evoked, and from thence draws an argument in favour of the soul's immortality. Lactantius, book vii. of his Divine Institution, says, "Should any one dare to deny the existence of souls after death, the magician will soon convince him, by making it appear." Ireneus, Clement Alexandrinus, Tertullian, and St. Cyprian, all affirmed the like. At present, indeed, it is otherwise, and we hear no more of magicians or demoniacs; yet such there will be, when it so pleases God.

When the congregations of Christians were become considerable, and several presumed to insult the Roman worship, the civil power exerted itself against them, and the commonalty, especially, were most violent in persecuting this new religion. The Jews, who confined themselves to their synagogues, so far from being persecuted, had particular privileges, and were allowed the exercise of their religion at Rome, as they are at present; all the different worships, in the several parts of the empire, were tolerated, though the senate did not adopt them: but the Christians, making no secret of their detestation of all those worships, and especially of that of the empire, were several times exposed to cruel trials.

One of the first and most celebrated martyrs was Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, who was condemned by the emperor Trajan himself, then in Asia, and, by his order, sent to Rome to be exposed to beasts, at a time when other Christians were under no open molestation in that city. His accusation is not known; but that emperor, being otherwise famous for clemency, St. Ignatius's enemies must have been very violent in their persecution. The history of his martyrdom relates, that the name of Jesus Christ was found engraven on his heart in golden characters; and thence it is, that the Christians, in some places, took the name of the Theophori, which Ignatius had given to himself.

We have still a letter of his, in which he intreats the bishops and Christians not to oppose his martyrdom; whether, even then, the Christians were strong enough to attempt a rescue, or that some of them might have interest to obtain his pardon, is not expressed. Another very remarkable circumstance is, that the Christians of Rome were allowed to go and meet him,

when he was brought thither; which evidently proves, that the man, and not the sect, was punished.

The persecution was so far from being continued that Origen, in his third book against Celsus, says, "It is easy to compute what number of Christians have died for their religion; few, and only from time to time, and by intervals, having died on that account."

So careful was God of his church, that, in spite of all its enemies, five councils were held in the first century, sixteen in the second, and thirty in the third; all tolerated: though sometimes they were forbidden, the magistrates in their mistaken timidity fearing that they might produce disturbances. Few of the reports of the proconsuls and prætors, who pronounced sentence on the Christians, are now remaining, and those are the only vouchers for ascertaining the accusations brought against them and their punishments.

We have a fragment of Dionysius of Alexandria, containing an extract of a proconsul of Egypt, under the emperor Valerian, which is as follows: "Dionysius, Faustus, Maximus, and Cheremon, being brought into court, the prefect Emilian thus addressed them: 'From my discourse with you, and from the many particulars I wrote to you, you must have been sensible that our princes have shown you great lenity and indulgence; I again repeat it to you, they refer your life and safety to yourselves, and put your fate into your own hands; they require of you only one thing, and that no more than what reason requires, which is, to worship the patron gods of their empire, and to forsake that other worship, which is so contrary to nature and good sense.'

"Dionysius answered, 'Every one has not the same gods, and every one worships those whom he believes to be really such.'

"The prefect Emilian replied: 'I see you are a set of ungrateful people, obstinately slighting the kindness which the emperors would show you. Assure yourselves, no longer shall you stay here; I will order you away to Cephro, in the farther part of Lybia; that, by the emperor's command, is to be the place of your banishment: farther, do not imagine you shall be allowed there to hold your meetings, or to go to pray in those places which you call cemeteries; any such thing is absolutely forbidden you, and what I will not allow.'"

Nothing can bear more evident marks of truth than this trial, and it shows that these meetings were occasionally prohibited; as, with us, the Calvinists are not allowed to hold any meeting whatever in Languedoc; and ministers and preachers

have been hanged, and even broken upon the wheel, for their disobedience. Likewise in England and Ireland the Catholics lie under the same prohibition, and, on some occasions, the delinquents have been condemned to die.

Amidst all the severity of the Roman laws, God inspired several emperors with indulgence towards the Christians. Dioclesian himself, whom ignorant people reckon a persecutor, and the first year of whose reign is still the epocha of martyrdom, for above eighteen years openly countenanced Christianity, and the most important posts about his person were filled by Christians. He even allowed a stately church to be built opposite his palace at Nicomedia, where he frequently resided; and, to crown all, he married a Christian lady.

Galerius Cæsar, from some unhappy prejudices against the Christians, by whom he imagined himself ill-used, induced Dioclesian to demolish the cathedral at Nicomedia. A Christian, of more zeal than prudence, tore to pieces the emperor's edict, and this gave rise to that so famous persecution, in which, throughout the whole extent of the Roman empire, above two hundred persons were sentenced to die, exclusive of those whom the populace, ever fanatic and inhuman, might massacre, without any form of law.

So great was the number of martyrs at different times, that much circumspection is requisite, to avoid weakening the truth of the history of the real confessors of our holy religion, by a dangerous mixture of fable and false martyrdom.

The Benedictine, Don Ruinart, otherwise a person of learning equal to his zeal, should have chosen his authentic acts with more discretion. A manuscript is not the more authentic for its agreement with a manuscript of the Feuillans, or for being taken from the abbey of St. Benedict on the Loire, or from a convent of Celestines at Paris: its antiquity must be evident; it must have been written by persons living at the time of the event, and further, must bear all the marks of truth and genuineness.

He might very well have omitted the story of Romanus, which happened in 303. This young man, it seems, had obtained Dioclesian's pardon at Antioch; yet, as he says, the judge Asclepiades condemned him to be burnt. The Jews, who had flocked to the execution, mocked young St. Romanus, and floutingly asked the Christians how their God, who had delivered Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, should suffer them to be burnt; on this, though the day was remarkably fine, such a tempest arose, as immediately quenched the

fire: then the judge ordered young Romanus's tongue to be cut out; and the emperor's first physician being present, officiously performed the operation, cutting his tongue off at the root. The young man, who before stammered, now spoke very fluently. The emperor was very much surprised at any one speaking so well without a tongue; and the physician, to repeat the experiment, cut out the tongue of a man who was passing by; but he died immediately after the operation.

Eusebius, from whom the credulous Ruinart has taken this tale, should have had more respect for the real miracles performed in the Old and New Testament, which nobody will ever call in question, than to foist among them such suspicious stories, which may give offence to the weak.

This last persecution did not spread throughout the whole empire. England had, at that time, some glimmerings of Christianity, which, however, soon were smothered, but appeared again under the Saxon kings. All the southern parts of Gaul and Spain swarmed with Christians. They were shown great favour in all those provinces by Cæsar Constantius Chlorus. He had a concubine, who was a Christian, and this no less a person than Constantine's mother, or St. Helena, for they were never openly married; and he even dismissed her in the year 292, on his marrying the daughter of Maximian Hercules; but she retained her ascendancy, and made use of it to inspire him with a strong affection for our holy religion.

Divine Providence, by means apparently human, now brought about the establishment and superiority of this church. Constantius Chlorus died at York in 306, and his children, by the daughter of a Cæsar, not being of age to claim the empire, Constantine boldly got himself chosen at York, by a body of soldiers, mostly Germans, Gauls, and Britons. It was not likely that such an election, made without the consent of the city of Rome, the senate, and the army, could subsist; but God gave him a complete victory over Maxentius, who had been chosen at Rome, and at length rid him of all his colleagues. It must be owned that, at first, he rendered himself utterly unworthy of the divine favour, murdering his wife, his son, and all his near relations.

What Zozimus relates on this head may be questioned: he says, that Constantine, tortured with remorse after so many crimes, inquired of the pontiffs of the empire if they had any expiations for him; and their answer was, that they knew of none. Indeed there had been none for Nero, as in Greece he did not presume to assist at the sacred mysteries. Yet the

Tauroboli were then in use, and it was not easy to believe that a despotic emperor should not have found one priest to grant him expiatory sacrifices. Perhaps it is still less to be believed that Constantine, being taken up with war, actuated by ambition, and surrounded with flatterers, could be at leisure for remorse. Zozimus adds, that an Egyptian priest, who came from Spain, having gained admittance to him, assured him of an expiation of all his crimes in the Christian religion. Osius, bishop of Corduba, is suspected to have been this priest.

However that be, Constantine openly communicated with the Christians, though he never was above a Catechumen, deferring his baptism to the hour of death. He built the city of Constantinople, which became the centre of the empire, and of the Christian religion. Now the church begins to assume an august appearance.

It is to be observed that, from the year 314, before Constantine resided in his new city, the Christians smartly revenged themselves on their persecutors. They threw Maximian's wife into the Orontes; they murdered all his relations in Egypt and Palestine; they massacred all the magistrates who had distinguished themselves by their zeal against Christianity. Dioclesian's widow and daughter, who had concealed themselves in Thessalonica, were discovered, and their bodies thrown into the sea. It were to be wished that the Christians had not given way so much to the spirit of revenge; but God, in his vindictive justice, was pleased that the hands of the Christians, as soon as they were at liberty to act, should be dyed with the blood of their unjust persecutors.

Constantine convened at Nicea, opposite to Constantinople, the first œcumenical council, in which Osius presided. There was determined the great question which disturbed the church, concerning Christ's divinity: one side availing themselves of the opinion of Origen, who in chap vi. against Celsus, says, "We offer up our prayers to God, through Jesus, who holds the middle place between created nature and the uncreated nature, who brings to us his father's grace, and presents our prayers to the great God as our high priest." They also pleaded several passages of St. Paul, some of which have been mentioned; but their capital foundation was these words of Jesus Christ himself: "My Father is greater than I." They held Jesus as the first-born of creation, as the most pure emanation from the Supreme Essence, but not precisely as God.

The other side, who were the orthodox, produced passages

more suitable to the eternal deity of Jesus, as this: "My Father and I are the same thing;" words which their adversaries make to mean no more than, "My Father and I have the same design, the same will: I have no other desires than those of my Father." Alexander, bishop of Alexandria, and after him Athanasius, headed the orthodox. In the opposite party were, Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia, seventeen other bishops, the priest Arius, and many other priests. The quarrel immediately became inflamed, St. Alexander calling his adversaries Anti-Christs.

At length, after much disputing and wrangling, the Holy Ghost, by the mouths of two hundred and ninety-nine bishops against eighteen, gave the following decision: "Jesus is the only Son of God, begotten of the Father, that is, of the substance of the Father, God of God, light of light, very God of very God, of one substance with the Father; we likewise believe in the Holy Ghost, &c." Such was the form of words in that council; and this instance shows the great superiority of the bishops over mere priests; for, according to two patriarchs of Alexandria, who have written the Chronicle of Alexandria in Arabic, two thousand persons of the second order sided with Arius. He was exiled by Constantine, but soon after the like punishment fell on Athanasius, and Arius was recalled to Constantinople: with such fervour, however, did St. Macarius pray to God that he would deprive Arius of life, before he came into the cathedral, that God heard his prayer, and Arius died in 330, in his way to the church. The emperor Constantine departed this life in 337, delivering his will into the hands of an Arian priest, and expiring in the arms of the chief of the Arians, Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia. He was not baptized till on his death-bed; but he left the church triumphant, though divided.

The Athanasians and Eusebians made war on each other with the most implacable animosity; and what is now called Arianism was, for a long time, the established doctrine in all parts of the empire.

Julian the philosopher, nicknamed the Apostate, was for accomodating these divisions, but failed in his good endeavours.

The second general council was held in 381, at Constantinople. In it was explained what the council of Nice had not thought fit to say, concerning the Holy Ghost, adding to the Nicean form, "That the Holy Spirit is the vivifying Lord, proceeding from the Father, and that he is worshipped and glorified with the Father and the Son."

It was not till towards the ninth century that the Latin church gradually enacted, "That the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son."

In 431, the third general council, held at Ephesus, determined that Mary was really the mother of God, and that Jesus had two natures and one person. Nestorius, bishop of Constantinople, for moving that the Blessed Virgin should be called the mother of Christ, was declared by the council to be a second Judas, and the two natures were further confirmed by the council of Chalcedonia.

I shall slightly pass over the following ages, as pretty well known. Unfortunately every one of these disputes occasioned wars, and the church was obliged to be continually in arms. God further permitted, to exercise the patience of the faithful, that, in the ninth century, the Greeks and Latins should come to an irreconcilable rupture. He further permitted, that the West should be distracted with twenty-nine bloody schisms for the see of Rome.

In the mean time, almost the whole Grecian church, and the whole of the African church, were enslaved by the Arabs, and afterwards fell under the Turks, who erected Mahometanism on the ruins of Christianity. The Roman church subsisted, but was always defiled with blood, for the space of above six hundred years of discord between the western empire and the priesthood: but these very quarrels increased her power; for the German bishops and abbots made themselves princes, and the popes, by degrees, acquired an absolute dominion in Rome and a country of a hundred leagues in extent. Thus God tried his church by humiliations, disturbances, by prosperity and magnificence.

The Latin church, in the sixteenth century, lost half Germany, Denmark, Sweden, England, Scotland, Ireland, Switzerland, and Holland. It has, indeed, by the Spanish conquest, gained more ground in America than it has lost in Europe; but, if its territories are enlarged, its subjects are much decreased.

Divine Providence seemed to design that Japan, Siam, India, and China, should be brought to acknowledge the Pope's supremacy, as an equivalent for the loss of Asia Minor, Syria, Greece, Egypt, Africa, Russia, and the countries above mentioned. St. Francis Xavier, a Jesuit, who carried the holy gospel to the East Indies and Japan, when the Portuguese went thither for costly merchandize, performed miracles in plenty, all attested by his reverend brethren. Some say that he raised nine persons from the dead; but father Ribadeneira

in his Flower of Saints, reduces the number to four, and that is full enough. Providence so eminently prospered this enterprize, that in less than a hundred years there were thousands of Roman catholics within the Japanese islands. But the devil was not wanting to sow his tares among the good seed. The Christians formed a destructive plot, which being followed by a cruel war, they were all exterminated in the year 1638. Hereupon the natives denied all strangers admittance into their harbours, except the Dutch, accounting them to be mere merchants, and not Christians: they were obliged to tread on the cross before they were allowed to dispose of their goods; and this was done in a prison where they were confined immediately on their arrival at Nangazaki.

The Roman Catholic and apostolic religion was not proscribed in China till of late, and with less cruelty. The Jesuits, indeed, had not displayed their supernatural power at the court of Pekin, by raising the dead to life: they had humbly limited themselves to the teaching of astronomy, the casting of cannon, and being mandarins. Their unhappy disputes with some Dominicans and others, gave such offence to the great emperor Yontchin, that this prince, though all equity and goodness, was so blind as to put a stop to the teaching of our holy religion, because our missionaries did not agree among themselves. He ordered them to depart the empire, but it was with all the tenderness of a father, supplying them with carriages, and every convenience, as far as the confines of his dominions.

All Asia, all Africa, half of Europe, the Dutch and English possessions in America, with the several unconquered parts of that vast continent, all the austral countries, which make a fifth part of the globe, are left as a prey to the devil, in verification of that holy saying, "Many are called, but few are chosen." If, as some learned persons say, the number of the inhabitants of the several parts of the globe, is about sixteen hundred millions, the holy catholic universal Roman church has, within its pale, nearly sixty millions, which amounts to more than the twenty-sixth part of the inhabitants of the known world.

CIRCUMCISION.

Herodotus, in relating what he had heard from the barbarians, among whom he travelled, mentions some fooleries, and most of our modern travellers do the like. He, indeed, does

not require his readers to believe him, when he is giving an account of Gyges, and Candaule; of Arion's being saved by a dolphin; of the consultation of the oracle, to know what Crœsus was doing, with its answer, that he was then boiling a tortoise in a covered pot: of Darius's horse neighing first, which gave his master the empire; and of a hundred other fables, which children are highly delighted with, and rhetoricians insert in their collections: but, when he speaks of what he has seen; of customs which he has inquired into; of antiquities which he has examined; he then speaks to men.

"The inhabitants of Colchis," says he, in his book *Euterpe*, "appear to have come originally from Egypt. This opinion I hold more from my own observation than from any hear-say; for I found, that in Colchis, the ancient Egyptians were remembered much more than the ancient customs of Colchis were in Egypt.

"Those people who dwell along the Pontus Euxinus, said they were a colony settled there by Sesostris; this I conjectured of myself, not only from their swarthy complexion and frizzled hair, but because the people of Colchis, Egypt, and Ethiopia, are the only people on earth who have practised circumcision from time immemorial; for the Phœnicians and the inhabitants of Palestine own, that they adopted circumcision from the Egyptians. The Syrians, now seated on the banks of the Thermodon and Pathenia, together with the Macrons, their neighbours, acknowledge that it is not long since they conformed to this Egyptian custom. It is chiefly by this, that they are perceived to be of Egyptian original.

"As to Ethiopia and Egypt, this ceremony being of a very ancient date among both nations, I cannot say which was the original; however, it is probable that the Ethiopians took it from the Egyptians; as, on the other hand, the Phœnicians, by their traffic and intercourse with the Greeks, have abolished the custom of circumcising new-born children."

It is clear, from this passage of Herodotus, that several nations had taken circumcision from Egypt; but no nation has ever said that they derived it from the Jews. To which then, must the origin of this custom be attributed, to that nation, from whom five or six others acknowledge they hold it, or to another nation, much inferior in power, less commercial, less military, hidden in a nook of Arabia Petræa, and which has never been able to introduce the least of its customs into any nation?

The Jews say, that they were first received into Egypt, by way of compassion and charity; now, is it not very pro-

bable, that the little people adopted a practice of the great people, and that the Jews joined in some of their masters' customs?

Clement of Alexandria relates, that Pythagoras, when travelling in Egypt, could not gain admittance to the mysteries, till he was circumcised; consequently, there was no being an Egyptian priest without circumcision. This priestly order subsisted when Joseph came into Egypt; the government was of great antiquity, and the old ceremonies of Egypt were observed with the most scrupulous precision.

The Jews acknowledge that they continued in Egypt two hundred and five years; they say, that in all that time they were not circumcised; this shows, that, during those two hundred and five years, the Egyptians did not borrow circumcision from the Jews: is it, then, to be supposed, that they borrowed this custom, after the Jews, according to their own testimony, run away with all the vessels which they had so kindly lent them? Will a master adopt the principal mark of his slave's religion, after robbing him and running away! Human nature is not of such a make.

The book of Joshua says, that the Jews were circumcised in the desert: "I have delivered you from what was a reproach to you among the Egyptians." Now, what else could this reproach be, to people hemmed in between the Phœnicians, Arabians, and Egyptians, but that for which those three nations despised them? How is this reproach removed? by taking away from them a little of the foreskin. Is not this the natural import of that passage?

The book of Genesis says, that Abraham had been circumcised before: but Abraham, having travelled into Egypt, which had, for a long time, been a flourishing monarchy, governed by a powerful king, circumcision may not, improbably, be supposed to have been established in a kingdom of such antiquity, before the Jewish nation was formed. Further, the circumcision of Abraham terminated in himself; it was not till Joshua's time that his posterity underwent that ceremony.

Now, before Joshua, the Israelites, by their own confession, came into many of the Egyptian customs; they imitated that nation in several sacrifices and ceremonies, as in fasting on the eve of Isis's feasts, in ablutions, in shaving the priest's heads; likewise in the burning of incense, the branched chandelier, the sacrifice of the red heifer, the purifying with hyssop, the abstaining from pork, the abomination of the kitchen utensils of strangers: all these things bear witness, that the little Hebrew people, whatever aversion they might have to the great Egyptian nation, had retained a vast number of their old

masters' customs. The driving of the goat Azazel into the desert, as laden with the sins of the people, is a plain imitation of an Egyptian practice; the very rabbins allow, that the word *Azazel* is not Hebrew. Where, then, is the improbability of the Hebrews having imitated the Egyptians in circumcision? it was no more than the Arabs, their neighbours, had done.

It is not at all strange, that God, having sanctified baptism, which is of such an ancient date among the Asiatics, should likewise have sanctified circumcision, of no less antiquity among the Africans. It has already been noticed, that it is in his power to annex his grace to such signs as he shall please to choose.

Again, the Jews, ever since their circumcision under Joshua, have constantly retained this custom, down to the present time. The Arabians have also adhered to it; but the Egyptians, who, at first, circumcised both male and female children, in process of time discontinued this operation on the females, and, at length limited it to priests, astrologers, and prophets. This we learn from Clement of Alexandria, and Origen. None of the Ptolemies appear to have been circumcised.

The Latin authors, who, contemptuously call the Jews, "*Curtus apella! Credat Judæus apella! Curti Judæ!*"—"The circumcised fellow! Trust a circumcised Jew! The circumcised Jews!" give no such epithets to the Egyptians. At present, the whole people of Egypt are circumcised, but from another reason, because Mahometanism borrowed the ancient circumcision practised in Arabia.

It is this Arabian circumcision which has been introduced among the Ethiopians, where both males and females are still circumcised.

It must be acknowledged, that this ceremony of circumcision seems, at first somewhat odd; but let it be observed, that the oriental priests consecrated themselves to the deities by particular marks. An ivy leaf was engraved, with a bodkin, on Bacchus's priests. Lucian tells us, that the votaries of the goddess Isis made certain characters on their wrists and necks; and the priests of Cybele emasculated themselves.

It is very likely, that the Egyptians, who revered the instrument of generation, and carried the figure of it in pompous procession, took it into their heads to offer up to Isis and Osiris, by whom every thing on earth was engendered, a small part of that member, by which, it is said, those deities had appointed the human species to be perpetuated. The eastern customs are so extremely different from ours, that, to a man

of ever so little reading, nothing should appear strange. A Parisian, on being told that the Hottentots cut out one of their male children's testicles, is quite astonished: and, perhaps, a Hottentot is equally surprised, that the Parisians should retain both.

COMMON SENSE.

There is sometimes to be found in idiomatical and vulgar expressions, an image of what passes in the hearts of all mankind. *Sensus communis* signified, among the ancient Romans, not only *common sense*, but also *humanity* and *sensibility*. As we are much inferior to the Romans, it signifies, with us, only half its import with them. It means only common understanding; a simple capacity to reason; the mere comprehension of ordinary things; a kind of mean between stupidity and genius. To say that a man *wants common sense*, is a cross affront; to say, that he *does not want common sense*, is an affront also, as it is as much as to say, that although he is not altogether stupid, he has neither genius nor wit. But whence comes this expression, *common sense*, if not from the senses? In the invention and use of this term, mankind plainly confess, that nothing enters into the mind but through the senses; would they, else, have used the word *sense*, to signify common understanding?

We sometimes say, that *common-sense* is very rare. What is the meaning of this phrase? certainly no more, than that the progress or exercise of reason is interrupted, in some men, by their prejudices or prepossessions. Hence we see a man, capable of reasoning very justly on one subject, err most grossly in arguing upon another. An Arabian, who may be an exact calculator, an ingenious chemist, and a good astronomer, believes, nevertheless, that Mahomet could put one half of the moon into his sleeve. Wherefore is it, that he is superior to mere common-sense, in judging of these three sciences, and inferior to it, in his conceptions of the half-moon in Mahomet's sleeve? In the first case, he sees with his own eyes, and judges with his own understanding; in the second, he sees with the eyes of others, shutting his own, and perverting that understanding which nature gave him.

In what manner can this strange perversion of mind be effected? How can those ideas, which succeed each other so regularly and constantly in our contemplations on numerous other objects, be so miserably confused in our reflecting upon

another, a thousand times more obvious and palpable? The capacity of the man, that is, his principles of intelligence, being still the same, some of his organs must be depraved; as we sometimes see in the nicest epicure a vitiated taste with regard to some species of viands. But how came the organ of the Arab, who sees a half moon in Mahomet's sleeve, to be thus depraved? by *fear!* He has been told, that if he does not believe in this story of the half moon and sleeve, his soul, in passing over the narrow bridge immediately after his death, will be tumbled into the gulf beneatn there to perish eternally. Again, he is further told, that if he should doubt the truth of the sleeve story, one dervise will accuse him of impiety; a second will prove him to be destitute of common sense, in that, having all possible motives of credibility laid before him, he yet refuses to submit his proud reason to the force of evidence; a third will have him brought before the petty divan of a petty province, and get him legally impaled.

All this strikes a panic into our good Arabian, his wife, sister, and all his little family. They do not want for sense in judging of other matters; but their conceptions are hurt in regard to this particular, just like that of Pascal, who saw continually a precipice by the side of his easy chair. But does our Arab really believe this story of Mahomet's sleeve? no: he endeavours to believe it; he says to himself, it is impossible, but it is true: I believe what I do not believe. Thus a confused heap of ideas are formed in his brain, which he is afraid to unravel; and this causes him to want *common sense* in reasoning upon this subject.

CONVULSION FITS.

About the year 1724, dancings were seen in St. Medard's church-yard; many were the miracles wrought there: one of these the dutchess du Maine has immortalized in a song:

> "A spruce shoe-boy, with left foot lame,
> Through special grace, got both the same."

These miraculous fits are known to have continued till a guard was placed at the chureh-yard.

> "The king forbids, in name and grace,
> God e'er to enter more this place."

The Jesuits, as is likewise known, (being unable to perform any such miracles, since their Xavier had exhausted all the society's gifts, by raising nine persons from the dead,) by way of counterpoise to the credit of the Jansenists, engraved a print of Christ in a Jesuit's habit; and it is further known, that a wag of the Jansenist party put under the print—

> "In monkish garb, O God, thou'rt dressed,
> That thou may'st never be caressed."

The Jansenists, the better to prove that Jesus Christ could never have put on the habit of a Jesuit, filled Paris with convulsions, and drew every body to their party. Carre de Montgeron, a counsellor of parliament, went and delivered to the king a collection, in quarto, of all their miracles, attested by a thousand witnesses; for which, with very good reason, he was put under confinement, and obliged to go through a regimen to bring him to his senses: but truth is always too strong for persecution; the miracles went on for thirty years successively, without any intermission. Sister Rose, sister Illuminated, sister Promised, and sister Devout, were perpetually sent for to people's houses. They used to have themselves whipped, and no marks of it were to be seen the next day; they could bear, without any show of pain, to be beaten on the breasts with sticks (no wonder, since they had been well fenced for the exhibition of such a farce;) they were laid before a great fire, with their faces copiously plaistered over with pomatum, and did not burn; at length, as time improves all arts, the scene ending in sticking swords into their fleshy parts, and crucifying them. Even a celebrated divine had likewise the honour of being extended on the cross, and all this to convince the world, that a certain bull was absurd and ridiculous, which might have been done at a much cheaper rate. Yet have both Jansenists and Jesuits, one and all, leagued together against the *Spirit of Laws*, and against ——, and against ——, and against ——, and against ——; and, after such doings, we have the face to laugh at the Laplanders, the Samoides, and the Negroes!

COUNTRY.

A COUNTRY is composed of many families; and, as self-love generally leads us to stand up for, and support our particular families, when a contrary interest does not intervene;

so, from the like self-love, a man stands up for his own town or village, which he calls his native home.

The more extended this native home is, the less we love it, for division weakens love; it is impossible in nature to have a tender love for a family so numerous as scarcely to be known.

The candidate, amidst his ambitious intrigues to be chosen ædile, tribune, prætor, consul, or dictator, makes a noise about his love for his country, whereas it is only himself that he loves. Every one is for securing to himself the freedom of lying at his own home, and that it shall be in no man's power to turn him out; every one is for being sure of his life and fortune. Thus the whole society coinciding in the like wishes, private interest becomes that of the public; and an individual, in praying only for himself, prays, in effect, for the whole community.

Every state, on the whole earth, indisputably has originally been a republic; it is the natural progress of human nature. A number of families, at first, entered into an alliance, to secure one another against bears and wolves; and that which had plenty of grain bartered with another which had nothing but wood.

On our discovery of America, the several tribes throughout that vast part of the world were found divided into republics; but there were only two kingdoms. Of a thousand nations, only two were subdued.

It was anciently so on our side of the globe: before the petty kings of Etruria and Rome started up, Europe was full of republics. Africa has still its republics: Tripoli, Tunis, and Algiers, which lie so far north as, in some measure, to confine on Europe, are commonwealths of robbers. The Hottentots, a people in the south of Africa, still live as men are said to have lived in the primitive ages of the world, free, all equal, no masters, no subjects, no money, and few or no wants: their sheep supply them both with food and raiment, and their mansions are huts of wood and earth: they are the very filthiest of men, and with a most rank smell; but this they are not sensible of, and they both live and die more quietly than we do.

Europe has eight republics, without monarchs: Venice, Holland, Switzerland, Genoa, Lucca, Ragusa, Geneva, and St. Marino. Poland, Sweden, and England, may be looked upon as republics under a king, but Poland alone calls itself such.

Now, which would you have your country to be, a monarchy, or a republic? This is a question which has been banded to

and fro these four thousand years. Ask the rich which is best, and they will unanimously vote for an aristocracy; inquire of the people, and they will, one and all, cry up a democracy; as for royalty, it is only kings who will prefer it. How then comes it to pass, that almost the whole earth is governed by monarchs? ask the rats, who proposed to hang a bell about the cat's neck. But the true reason is, that men very rarely deserve to be their own governors.

It is a sad case, that often there is no being a good patriot, without being an enemy to other men. The elder Cato, that worthy patriot, in giving his vote in the senate, was always accustomed to say, Such is my opinion; and down with Carthage. A great part of patriotism is thought to consist in wishing one's native country a flourishing trade, and distinguished success in war. Now it is manifest that, for one country to gain, another must lose, and its successes must, of course, spread calamity in other parts. Such then is the state of human affairs, that to wish an increase of grandeur to one's native country, is wishing harm to its neighbours. He who is a citizen of the universe, would have his native country neither greater nor smaller, richer nor poorer.

CRITICISM.

I DO not here intend to speak of the criticism of scholiasts, who pretend to restore a word of an ancient author, very well understood before; neither shall I meddle with those real critics who, as far as is possible, have cleared up ancient history and philosophy. The satirical critics are the men I am now to deal with.

A man of letters one day reading Tasso with me, fell on this stanza:

> " The trumpet now, with hoarse resounding breath
> Convenes the spirits in the shades of death:
> The hollow caverns tremble at the sound!
> The air re-echoes to the noise around!
> Not louder terrors shake the distant pole,
> When through the skies the rattling thunders roll;
> Not greater tremors heave the labouring earth,
> When vapours, pent within, contend for birth!"

He afterwards read, as they fell under his eye, several stanzas of the like force and harmony: " How!" cried he; " is this what your Boileau is pleased to call tinsel; is it thus he

strives to depreciate a great man, who lived a hundred years before him, the better to exalt another great man, who lived sixteen hundred years before him, and who would not have failed to have done justice to Tasso?"

"Be easy," said I to him; "let us look into Quinaut's operas." What we met with at the opening of the book, could not but incense us against the petulance of criticism; it was the following passage in the admirable opera of Armida.

"*Sidonia.* The monster hatred is of barbarous mien,
And truly frightful, wheresoever seen.
Those hearts love fetters in his silken chain,
He dooms to suffer anxious, poignant pain:
If, then, thy future lot be in thy power,
Choose thou indifference. Many a happy hour
She will insure thee;—but beware love's schemes;
They are but meteors, phantoms, visions, dreams.

Armida. No, no: it is not possible to change,
(And, like the bee, from sweet to sweet, to range,)
This heart enthralled. Can we the ocean still
When heaved and troubled, by the word or will?
Renoud offends; too amiable soul!
And fate commands me, fate beyond control,
To hate, or love. No choice to walk between
The pangs of love divine, the sting of hatred keen."

We went through the whole piece, and it must be owned that the beauty of Tasso's genius is enhanced by Quinaut. "Well," said I to my friend, "after this could you think that Boileau should continually make it his business to expose Quinaut as a wretched poetaster? He even brought Louis XIV. to believe that this beautiful, soft, pathetic, elegant writer, owed all his merit to Lully's music."—"That I can very easily account for," answered my friend; "it was not the musician Boileau was jealous of, but the poet."—"However, what signifies the saying of a man who, to tag a rhyme to a line ending in *aut*, sometimes fell foul of *Boursaut*, sometimes of *Henaut*, sometimes of *Quinaut*, according to the terms on which he stood with those gentlemen? But, that your warmth against injustice may not cool, only go to the window, and view that grand front of the Louvre, by which Perraut has gained immortal reputation. This ingenious artist happened to be brother to a very learned member of the Academy, between whom and Boileau there had been some literary wrangling; and for this, truly, M. Boileau transmits this man to posterity with the character of a paltry architect."

"My friend, after a pause, replied with a sigh, "This is the temper of man." The duc de Sully, in his Memoirs, speaks of the cardinal d'Ossat, and secretary Villeroy, as bad ministers. 'Louvois strove to suppress in himself any esteem for the great Colbert: "They," said I, "did not print any thing against each other whilst living: this is a folly, scarcely seen in any but divines, scholars and lawyers."

We had a man of merit, La Motte, who has written very fine stanzas.

Beauty, beset by all the charms,
Which youth and passions can inspire,
Resorts, at times, to virtue's arms,
To stem the all-consuming fire.
But this constraint, from dreaded shame,
Preserves from passions, dear to love:
Passions that feed a glowing flame,
Caught from Promethean fire above.
Yet chastity's reputed name,
Emboldens her to quench the flame."

"The stern philosopher, in vain,
(Who wears a thousand vices' chain,)
Boasts of a soul, from error free!
To virtue's self a votary!
It is not virtue is his aim,
His heart inflated, altars claim.
His varnished wisdom would impart
An idol, decked for every heart."

"Pharsalia and Arbella's plains
Two martial triumphs once displayed,
The patriot's heart, and soldier's veins,
Still beat for laurels ne'er to fade.
But to success their fame they owe,
For did not victory consecrate
Them demi-gods,—we surely know
That Philip's warlike son, by fate,
Would prove a Hotspur, rash and bold,
And Cæsar's self the rebel would unfold."

"This amiable author," said my companion, "has, more than once, arrayed philosophy in the graceful attire of poesy. Had he always written such stanzas, he would have been the chief lyric poet among us; yet, whilst such beautiful pieces came from him, a contemporary of his could call him, 'A green goose;' and in another place say, 'The tiresome beauty of his propositions;' and in another, 'They have but one fault, they should have been written in prose: one sees, with half an eye, they came from Quinaut.'"

He pursues him every where; every where charges him with dryness, and want of harmony.

"Perhaps you would be glad to see the odes, written some years after, by this same censor, who tried La Motte in so arbitrary a manner, and decried him with such contempt? Here are some specimens."—

"This sovereign power is but a glittering chain,
Which rivets him to others' bliss or pain,
The brilliant virtues, that adorn his mind,
Are not by nature his, though these in him you'll find."

"Nought doth exist, that time will not devour:
Nature's arcana's placed beyond our power."

"The virtue, that in her displays,
Its thousand charms, so sweet to see
Is but the well-reflected rays
Of what exists in thee.
Enriched, alone, by thee possessed,
It lives congenial in thy breast.
Her's is politeness, glimmering bright,
Derived from thy resplendent light."

"They through thy probity, have seen
Thy people's false alarms;
And hate, who comes with rancour keen,
Subdued by virtue's arms."

"Unveil to my bewildered sight
Those deities, of thought or night;
Abstraction's emblems, oft our care;
Synonimous with empty air."

"What is more sweet, and passing strange,
When two, one common burden share,
That one, the least, at large should range
And make her part the other bear?
Thus o'er the frame, the human soul,
For pleasure, holds her high control."

"To be sure," said my judicious philologist, "this is wretched trash, to be published as models, after criticising a writer with so much scurrility." The author had done much better to have left his adversary in the quiet enjoyment of his merit, and have retained his own share of it: but, alas! the "*genus irritabile vatum*" is still as sick as ever, with the overflowings of an acrid bile. The public, its views, extending no farther than amusement, overlook these trifles in men of talents. It sees in an allegory called Pluto, some judges con-

demned to be flead, and sitting in hell, on a seat covered with their skins, instead of the lilies:* the reader never troubles himself, whether the judges deserved it or not, or whether the plaintiff, who had summoned them before Pluto, be in the right or wrong; he reads those verses purely for his pleasure, and, if they afford him pleasure, that is all he desires; if the allegory disgusts him, he closes the book, and would not stir a foot, to have the sentence fully confirmed or annulled.

Racine's inimitable tragedies have been all criticised, and very badly, because the critics were his rivals. The competent judges of an art, are the professors of it; true, but when is it they are not corrupted?

An artist, very skilful, and, withal, a man of taste, without either prejudice or envy, would make an excellent critic; but it is a very difficult matter to meet with such a man.

DELUGE.

That ever the whole globe was, at one time, totally overflowed with water, is physically impossible. The sea may have covered all parts successively, one after the other; and this could be only in a gradation so very slow, as to take up a prodigious number of ages. The sea, in the space of five hundred years, has withdrawn from Aiguesmortes, from Frejus, and from Ravenna, once large ports, leaving about two leagues of land quite dry. This progression shows, that, to make the circuit of the globe, it would require two millions two hundred and fifty thousand years. A very remarkable circumstance is, that this period comes very near to that which the earth's axis would take up in raising itself again, and coinciding with the equator; a motion, so far from improbable, that, for these fifty years past, some apprehensions have been entertained of it, but it cannot be accomplished under two millions three hundred thousand years.

The strata, or beds of shells, every where found, sixty, eighty, and even a hundred leagues from the sea, prove, beyond all dispute, that it has insensibly deposited those maritime products on grounds which were once its shores; but that the water, at one and the same time, should cover the whole earth, is a physical absurdity, which the laws of gravitation, as well

* The arms of France, embroidered on the covering of the benches, in courts of justice.

as those of fluids, and the deficiency of the quantity of water, demonstrate to be impossible: not that any thing here is meant, in the least, to affect the great truth of the universal deluge, as related in the Pentateuch; on the contrary, this is a miracle, and therefore to be believed; it is a miracle, therefore could not be effected by physical causes.

The whole history of the deluge is miraculous. It is a miracle, that forty days' rain should have submerged the four parts of the world, so that the waters should rise fifteen cubits above the highest mountains; it is a miracle, that there should have been cataracts, doors, and apertures in heaven; it is a miracle, that all animals should have repaired to the ark, from the several parts of the world; it is a miracle, that Noah should have found fodder for them during ten months; it is a miracle, that all the creatures, with their provisions, could be contained in the ark; it is a miracle, that most of them did not die there; it is a miracle, that, at going out of the ark, sustenance could be found for man and beast; it is likewise a miracle, that one Pelletier should have conceited, that he had explained, how all the several kinds of creatures might very naturally be contained and fed in the ark.

Now, the history of the deluge, being the most miraculous thing ever heard of, it is idle to go about elucidating it. There are mysteries which we believe through faith; and faith consists in believing, what reason does not believe; which is another miracle.

Thus, the story of the universal deluge, is like that of the tower of Babel; of Balaam's ass; of the fall of Jericho, at the blowing of the trumpets; of the waters turned into blood; of the passage of the Red Sea; and of all the miracles which God was pleased to perform in behalf of his chosen people. These are depths unfathomable by the line of human reason.

DESTINY.

Of all the books which have reached our time, the most ancient is Homer. Here we become acquainted with the manners of profane antiquity, with heroes and gods, as rude and unpolished as if made in the likeness of man; but there, on the other hand, we meet with the elements of philosophy, and especially the notion of *destiny*, no less lord of the gods, than the gods are lords of the world.

Jupiter would fain save Hector: he consults the destinies; he weighs the fates of Hector and Achilles in scales, and,

finding that the Trojan must absolutely be slain by the Greek, he is sensible all opposition to it would be fruitless; and, from that moment, Apollo, Hector's guardian genius, is obliged to forsake him (Iliad, lib. xxii.;) and though Homer, according to the privilege of antiquity, often interlards his poem with quite opposite ideas, yet is he the first in whom the notion of destiny occurs; so that, it must be supposed to have been current in his time.

This notion of destiny was not received by the Jewish Pharisees till several ages after; for the Pharisees themselves, who, among that insignificant people, were the principal literati, were but of a modern date. At Alexandria, they adulterated the ancient Jewish opinions, with many Stoic tenets. St. Jerome even says, that their sect is but little prior to our vulgar era.

Philosophers never stood in need of Homer, or the Pharisees, to be convinced, that every thing is done by immutable laws; that every thing is settled; and that every thing is a necessary effect.

Either the world subsists by its own nature, by its physical laws, or a Supreme Being has formed it by his primitive laws; in either case, those laws are immutable; in either case, every thing is necessary; heavy bodies gravitate towards the centre of the earth, and cannot tend to remain in the air; pear-trees can never bear pine-apples; the instinct of a spaniel can never be the instinct of an ostrich; every thing is arranged, set in motion, and limited.

Man can have but a certain number of teeth, hairs, and ideas; and a time comes when he necessarily loses them. It is a contradiction, that what was yesterday, has not been; and what is to-day, should not be: no less a contradiction is it, that a thing, which is to be, should not come to pass.

If thou couldst give a turn to the destiny of a fly, I see no reason why thou mightest not as well determine the destiny of all other flies, of all animals, of all men, and of all nature; so that, at last, thou wouldst be more powerful than God himself.

It is common for weak people to say, such a physician has cured my aunt of a most dangerous illness: he has made her live ten years longer than she would. Others as weak, but, in their own opinion, very wise, say, the prudent man owes his fortune to himself,

> 'No God we want, while we have prudence nigh:
> Thou art our goddess, Fortune, placed on high."

But the prudent man is sometimes crushed by his destiny, instead of making it; it is their destiny that renders men prudent.

Some profound politicians affirm, that, had Cromwell, Ludlow, Ireton, and about a dozen more Parliamentarians, been made away with a week before the cutting off Charles the First's head, that king might have lived longer, and have died in his bed. They are all in the right; and may further add, that, had all England been swallowed up by the sea, that monarch would not have ended his days on a scaffold at Whitehall, near the Banqueting-house; but, by the arrangement of occurrences, Charles was to have his head cut off.

Cardinal d'Ossat was unqestionably a man of more prudence than the lunatic in Bedlam; but is it not manifest, that the wise d'Ossat's organs were of another texture than that madman's? So a fox's organs differ from those of a crane, or a lark.

The physician has saved thy aunt: allowed; but herein he certainly did not reverse the order of nature; he conformed to it. It is evident, that thy aunt could not hinder herself being born in such a town, and having a certain illness, at such a time; that the physician could be no where, but in the town where he was; that thine aunt was to send for him; and that he was to prescribe for her those medicaments, which have effected her cure.

A peasant imagines that the hail which has fallen in his ground is purely matter of chance; but the philosopher knows that there is no such thing as chance; and that, by the constitution of the world, it must necessarily have hailed that day, in that very place.

Some, alarmed at this truth, are for having it, as straitened debtors, who offer half to their creditors, desiring some forbearance for the remainder. There are, say they, necessary events,* and others which are not so; but it would be odd, indeed, that one part of the world were fixed, and not the other; that some things which happen, were to happen, and that others, which happen, were not necessarily to happen. On a close examination, the doctrine which opposes that of destiny must appear loaded with absurdities, and contrary to the idea of an eternal providence: but many are destined to reason

* The physical world is subject to invariable laws; man, therefore, as a physical being, is, like other bodies, governed by those invariable laws: but, as an intelligent being, his nature requires him to be a free agent.

wrongly, others not to reason at all, and others to persecute those who do reason.

You ask me, what then becomes of liberty? I understand you not. I know nothing of that liberty you speak of, nor yourself, indeed; else you would not be so long controverting about its nature. If you will, or rather, if you can, calmly examine with me what it is, turn to the letter [L]

DREAMS.

"Those airy dreams our senses entertain,
While fleeting shadows populate the brain,
Which nor the temples, in the lofty sky,
Nor from the gods are sent, who reign on high.
Each soul creative, but with mortal flame,
Stamps airy nothing with a place and name."

But how, when all the senses are deadened in sleep, is there one within still alive and active? What! when your eyes have lost their sight, and your ears their hearing, do you still see and hear in your dreams? The dog hunts in his dreams; barks, chases his prey, and feasts on his reward. That the poet versifies, the mathematician views figures, the metaphysician reasons lightly or wrongly, in his sleep, we have many striking instances.

Is this the action only of the body's organs, or is it the soul which, now freed from the power of the senses, acts in full enjoyment of its properties?

If the organs alone produce our dreams by night, why not our ideas by day? If it be merely the soul, acting of itself, and quiet by the suspension of the senses, which is the cause and subject of your sleeping ideas, whence is it that they are almost ever irrational, irregular, and incoherent? Can it be, that in the time of the soul's most abstract quietude, its imagination should be the most confused? Is it fantastical when free? Were it born with metaphysical ideas, as some writers who were troubled with waking dreams, have affirmed, its pure and luminous ideas of being, of infinitude, and of all primary principles, naturally should awake in it with the greatest energy when the body is sleeping, and men should philosophize best in their dreams!

Whatever system you espouse, however you may labour to prove that memory stirs the brain, and the brain the soul, you must allow that, in all your ideas in sleep, you are entirely passive; your will has no share in those images. Thus it is

clear that you can think seven or eight hours on a stretch, without having the least inclination to think, and even without being certain that you do think. Consider this, and tell me what is man's compound?

Superstition has always dealt much in dreams; nothing, indeed, was more natural. A man, deeply concerned about his mistress who lies ill, dreams that he sees her dying: and the next day she actually dies; then, to be sure, God has given him previous knowledge of his beloved's death!

A commander of an army dreams of gaining a battle; gains it: then the gods had intimated to him that he should be conqueror!

It is only such dreams as meet with some accomplishment that are taken notice of; the others we think not worth remembrance. Dreams make full as great a part of ancient history as oracles.

The end of ver. 26, chap. xix. of Leviticus, the Vulgate renders thus: "Thou shalt not observe dreams." But the word *dream* is not in the Hebrew! and it would be somewhat odd, that the observance of dreams should be forbidden in the same book which tells us, that Joseph saved Egypt, and brought his family to great prosperity, by interpreting three dreams.

The interpretation of dreams and visions was so common, that something beyond this knowledge was required: the magician was sometimes even to guess what another had dreamed. Nebuchadnezzar forgetting a dream, ordered the magicians on pain of death, to find it out; but Daniel, the Jew, who was of the same school, saved their lives, both finding out and interpreting the king's dream. This, and many other accounts, prove that oneiromancy was not prohibited by the Jewish institutes.

END—FINAL CAUSES.

A MAN, it seems, must be stark mad to deny that the stomach is made for digestion, the eye to see, and the ear to hear.

On the other hand, he must be strangely attached to final causes, to affirm that stone was made to build houses, and that China breeds silk worms to furnish Europe with satin.

But it is said, if God has manifestly made one thing with design, he had design in every thing. To allow a providence in one case, and deny it in another, is ridiculous. Whatever

is made, was foreseen and arranged; now, every arrangement has its object, every effect its cause; therefore every thing is equally the result, or the product, of a final cause; therefore it is equally true to say that noses were made to wear spectacles and fingers to be decorated with diamonds, as it is to say that the ear has been made to hear sound, and the eye to receive light.

This difficulty, I apprehend, may be easily cleared up, when the effects are invariably the same in all times and places; when such uniform effects are independent of the beings they appertain to, there is then evidently a final cause.

All animals have eyes, and they see; all have ears, and they hear; all a mouth, with which they eat; a stomach, or something similar, by which they digest; all an orifice, which voids the excrement; all an instrument of generation, and these natural gifts operate in them without the intervention of any art. Here are clear demonstrations of final causes, and to gainsay so universal a truth, would be to pervert our faculty of thinking.

But it is not in all places, nor at all times, that stones form edifices; all noses do not wear spectacles; all fingers have not rings; nor are all legs covered with silk stockings: therefore a silk-worm is not made to cover my legs, as your mouth is made to eat, and your orifice for evacuation. Thus there are effects produced by final causes, but withal many which cannot come within that appellation.

But both the one and the other are equally agreeable to the plan of general providence; for certainly nothing comes to pass in opposition to it, or so much as without it. Every particular within the compass of nature is uniform, immutable, and the immediate work of their Author. From him are derived the laws by which the moon is three-fourths of the cause of tides, and the sun the other fourth: it is he who has given a rotary motion to the sun, by which, in five minutes and a half, it emits rays of light into the eyes of men, crocodiles, and cats.

But, if, after many centuries, we have hit on the invention of shears and spits, with the former shearing the sheep of their wool, and with the latter roasting them for food, what can be inferred from thence, but that God has so made us, that one day we should necessarily grow ingenious and carnivorous?

Sheep, doubtless, were not absolutely made to be dressed and eaten, since several nations abstain from that sanguinary practice. Men were not essentially created to butcher one

another, for the Bramins and Quakers never kill any body; but the composition we are made of is frequently productive of massacres, as it produces calumnies, vanities, persecutions, and impertinencies; not that the formation of man is precisely the final cause of our folly and brutality, a final cause being universal and invariable, in all places and at all times. The crimes and absurdities of the human mind are, nevertheless, in the eternal order of things. In threshing corn the flail is the final cause of the grain's separation; but if the flail, in threshing the corn, destroys a thousand insects, this is not from any determinate will of mine, neither is it mere chance: these insects were at that time under my flail, and it was determined they were to be there.

It is consequential to the nature of things that one man is ambitious; he forms other men into military bodies; that he is beaten, or gains a victory: but never can it be said that man was created by God to be knocked on the head in battle.

The instruments given to us by nature cannot always be final causes, ever in motion, and infallible in their effect. The eyes given us for sight are not always open; every sense has its intervals of rest: there are even some senses we make no use of: for instance, in the case of a poor girl of fourteen, immured in a convent; that door from which was to proceed a new generation, is for ever shut up; still the final cause subsists, and, as soon as it is free, will act.

EQUALITY.

WHAT does one dog owe to another, and one horse to another? nothing. No animal depends on its fellow, but man, partaking of that spark of divinity called reason,—what advantage accrues to him from this? to be a slave almost every where throughout the earth.

Were this earth what it apparently should be; that is, did man every where meet with an easy, certain and safe subsistence, and a climate suitable to his nature, it is manifestly impossible that one man should have enslaved another. When this earth shall every where produce salubrious fruits; when the air, which should contribute to our life, shall not bring us sickness and death; when man shall stand in need of no other lodging and bed than that of the deer and roebuck; then the Gengis Khans and the Tamerlanes will have no other domestics than their children, and these will have as much natural affection, as to assist them in their old age.

In this, so natural a state, which all quadrupeds, birds, and reptiles, enjoy, man would be as happy as they: dominion would then be a chimera, an absurdity, which no one would think of; for who would make a bustle to get servants, without any want of their service?

Should any individual, of a tyrannical disposition and extraordinary strength, take it into his head to make a slave of his weaker neighbour, the thing would be impracticable: the party to be oppressed would be a hundred leagues out of the oppressor's reach, before he had taken his measures.

Thus a freedom from wants would necessarily make all men equal. It is the distress annexed to our species, which subjects one man to another: not that inequality is a real misfortune; the grievance lies in dependence. What signifies one man being styled his highness; another, his holiness? but to serve either is disagreeable.

A numerous family has successfully cultivated a good soil, whilst two small neighbouring families cannot bring their stubborn ground to produce any thing: the poor families must either become servants to the opulent one, or extirpate it; this is self-evident: one of the indigent families, for a subsistence, goes and offers its labour to the rich; the other goes to dispossess it by force of arms, and is beaten. The former is the origin of domestics and labourers; from the latter, slavery is derived.

In our calamitous globe it is impossible, that men, living together in society, should not be divided into two classes, the rich, who command, and the poor, who serve or obey: these two are subdivided into thousands, and these thousands have their further subdivisions and gradations.

All the oppressed are not absolutely unhappy. Most of them being born in a servile state, continual labour preserves them from too sensible a feeling of their situation; but, whenever they do feel it, wars are the consequence—as, at Rome, between the plebeian and the patrician parties: likewise those of the peasants in Germany, England, and France. All these wars terminate, soon or late, in the subjection of the people; because the great have money, and money does every thing within a state; I say, within a state; for between nation and nation it is otherwise: a nation which handles iron best, will ever be too strong for that which, with all its abundance of gold, is deficient in skill and courage.

Every man is born with no small propensity to power, riches, and pleasure, and has naturally a delight in indolence: consequently every man is for having the money, wife, or

daughters, of others; would subject them to all his humours, and do no work, or, at least, what only pleased himself. You see that for men, with such fine dispositions, to be equal, is as impossible as that two preachers, or two professors of divinity, should not be jealous of each other.

Mankind, in the present state, cannot subsist, unless an affinity of useful men have the misfortune of being without any possession whatever; for, to be sure, no man in easy circumstances will plough your grounds; and if you are in want of a pair of shoes, you must find some other hand than a serjeant-at-law to make them for you. Thus inequality is, at the same time, both the most natural, and the most chimerical thing in the world.

Men being excessive in every thing where they can be so, this inequality has been carried too far: in several governments it is a standing maxim, that a citizen is not allowed to quit the country where he happened to be born; the import of this law is visibly this: "The country is so bad, and ill governed, that we forbid any person whatever to go out of it, lest every body should leave it." Now, act more wisely; create in your subjects a delight to stay in your country, and in foreigners a desire of coming thither.

Every man has a right to believe himself naturally equal to other men; but it does not from hence follow, that a cardinal's cook may order his eminence to dress his dinner: the cook, indeed, may say, I am as much a man as my master; like him, I cried at my birth, and he will die in the same agonies and amidst the same ceremonies, as I; the animal functions are alike in both; if the Turks should make themselves masters of Rome, and I come to be a cardinal, and my master reduced to turn cook, I will take him into my service. There is nothing in this soliloquy, but what is rational and just; yet, till the grand seignior makes himself master of Rome, the cook is to do his duty, else there is an end of human society.

As to him, who is neither cook to a cardinal, nor holds any state employment, and who has no connexion or dependence, but who is chagrined at being every where received either with an air of protection or contempt; who plainly sees, that many monsigneurs have neither more learning, more genius, nor more virtue, than himself, and to whom it is a torment to be sometimes in their anti-chamber—what would you have him do? take himself away.

EZEKIEL.

OF SOME SINGULAR PASSAGES IN THIS PROPHET, AND OF SOME ANCIENT CUSTOMS.

It is at present very well known, that we are not to judge of ancient customs by modern times. He who would go about to reform the court of Alcinous, in the Odyssey, by that of the grand seignior, or of Louis XIV. would be little applauded by the learned; and, to find fault with Virgil, for having represented king Evander, receiving ambassadors, with a bear-skin for his mantle, and a dog on each side of him, would be very bad criticism.

The manners of the ancient Egyptians and Jews vary from ours, still more than those of king Alcinous, of Nausicæ, his daughter, and the good man, Evander. Ezekiel, when a slave among the Chaldeans, had a vision, near the little river Chebar, which runs into the Euphrates.

It is not to be thought strange, that he should have seen animals with four faces, and four wings, and their feet like those of calves; nor that he saw wheels self-moving, and having in them the spirit of life. These symbols are pleasing to the very imagination; but several critics cannot be reconciled to the order, given him by the Lord, that, during three hundred and ninety days, he should eat barley, wheat, and millet bread, besmeared with man's dung. Then said the prophet, "Ah, Lord God! behold, my soul hath not hitherto been polluted." And the Lord answered, "Well, instead of man's excrements, I allow thee cow-dung, and thou shalt prepare thy bread therewith."

As it is not customary with us, to eat bread with such marmalade, these orders, to the generality of men, appear unworthy of the divine majesty. It must, however, be owned, that cow-dung, and all the diamonds of the Mogul, are entirely alike, not only in the eyes of a divine being, but in those of a genuine philosopher; and, as to the reasons God might have, for ordering such repasts to his prophet, is not for us to examine.

It is sufficient to show, that these orders, however odd and disgusting to us, did not seem so to the Jews. True it is, that in St. Jerome's time, the synagogue did not allow the reading of Ezekiel, under thirty years of age; but this was because, in chap. xviii. it is said, that "the son shall no longer bear the iniquity of the father;" and it shall be no more said, "the

fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth have been set on edge."

This was expressly contradicting Moses, who, in Numbers, chap. xxviii. declares, that the children shall bear the iniquity of their fathers, to the third and fourth generation.

Farther, Ezekiel, chap. xx. makes the Lord say, that he gave to the Jews, "precepts which were not good." This was the principal reason of the synagogue's prohibiting young persons from reading Ezekiel, as it might bring them to doubt of the irrefragability of the Mosaic laws.

The cavillers of our times are still more astonished, at the manner of the prophet's describing the wickedness of Jerusalem, in chap. xvi. where he introduces the Lord, speaking to a girl: and the Lord said to the girl, "In the day thou wast born, thy navel-string was not cut; thou wast neither salted nor swaddled: I pitied thee: thou art grown up, thy breasts are fashioned, and thine hair is grown: I passed by thee, and looked upon thee; behold, thy time was the time of love. I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: thou becamest mine; I washed thee with water, and anointed thee with oil; I clothed thee, and shod thee; I girded thee about with fine linen, and covered thee with silks; I decked thee also with ornaments, and put bracelets on thy hands, and a chain on thy neck; I put a jewel on thy forehead, and ear-rings in thy ears, and a crown on thy head, &c. But thou didst trust in thy beauty, and playedst the harlot, because of thy renown, and pouredst out thy fornications on every one that passed by: thou hast built an eminent place; thou hast prostituted thyself in public places; thou hast spread thy legs to every one that passed by; and thou hast lain with Egyptians; and, lastly, thou hast paid thy lovers, and hast made presents to them, to lie with thee; and, in paying, instead of being paid, thou hast done the reverse of other girls. There is a proverb, Like mother, like daughter; and the like is said of thee."

Still greater clamour is raised against chap. xxiii. A mother had two daughters, who parted with their virginity very early in life; the name of the elder, was Aholah, and that of the younger, Aholibah:—"Aholah, doated on young lords, and captains, and rulers; she committed whoredom with the Egyptians in her youth. Aholibah, her sister, was more corrupt in her whoredoms than she, with captains, and rulers, clothed most gorgeously; horsemen riding upon horses, all of them desirable young men: she has discovered her nakedness, she has increased her whoredoms, she has eagerly

sought the embraces of those, whose flesh is as the flesh of asses, and whose issue is like the issue of horses."

These descriptions, which appear scandalous to so many weak minds, signify no more than the sins of Jerusalem and Samaria. Expressions, to us, indelicate, and obscure, were not so at that time. The like plainness openly shows itself in other passages of Scripture. It often speaks of "opening the womb." The terms, in which are expressed the junction of Boaz with Ruth, and of Judah with his daughter-in-law, in Hebrew, have nothing unseemly in them; but would be very much so in our language.

He, who is not ashamed of being naked, does not cover himself. Where was the shame of naming the genitals in those times, when it was customary on any important promise, to touch the genitals of him to whom the promise was made? It was a mark of respect, a symbol of fidelity; as, formerly, among us, the feudal tenants put their hands between those of their paramounts.

We have thought fit to render the genitals, by thigh: Eliezer puts his hand under Abraham's thigh; the like Joseph does to Jacob. This had been a custom of very great antiquity in Egypt; and, so far were that people from annexing shame and turpitude, to what we dare neither expose nor name, that they carried, in procession, a large figure of the virile member, called *Phallum*, in thanksgiving to the gods for their goodness, in making that member the instrument of human propagation.

All this sufficiently proves, that our ideas of decency and purity do not correspond with those of other nations. At what period of time did politeness prevail among the Romans, more than in the Augustine age? Yet Horace, the ornament of that age, and in a moral piece, roundly says,

"*Nec mihuo, ne dum futuo vir rure reverti.*"

Augustus makes use of the same expression in an epigram against Fulvia.

He who, among us, should openly pronounce the word synonimous with *futuo*, would be looked on with as much contempt as a drunken porter: this word, and several others, made use of by Horace, and other elegant authors, appear to us still more indecent than Ezekiel's expressions. Whether we read ancient authors, or travel in distant countries, let us lay aside all our prejudices. Nature is every where the same, and customs every where different.

FABLES.

Are not the most ancient fables manifestly allegorical? The first we know of, according to our chronology, is that related in the ninth chapter of the book of Judges. The trees were about to choose a king: the olive would not quit the care of its oil, nor the fig-tree of its figs, nor the vine-tree of its rich juice; and all the other trees had their fruit no less at heart; so that, the thistle, being good for nothing, and having prickles which could do hurt, made itself king.

The Pagan fable of Venus, as we have it in Hesiod, is an allegory of all nature. The generative parts fell from the sky on the sea shore: Venus receives her being from this precious spume; her first name signifies, "Lover of generation." Can there be a more sensible image? This Venus is the goddess of beauty; beauty is no longer amiable, than when accompanied by the graces; beauty gives rise to love; love has shafts which every heart has felt: he is hood-winked, to conceal the faults of the object beloved.

Wisdom is conceived in the brain of the sovereign of the gods, under the name of Minerva: the soul of man is a divine fire, which Minerva shows to Prometheus, and he makes use of this divine fire to animate man.

Every body must perceive, in these fables, a lively portraiture of nature. Most of the other fables are, either corruptions of ancient histories, or the chimeras of imagination. It is with ancient fables, as with modern tales; some are of the moral kind, and quite charming, and there are others as insipid.

FALSITY OF HUMAN VIRTUES.

When the duc de la Rochefoucault had published his *Thoughts on Self-love*, one M. Esprit, of the Oratory, wrote a captious book, entitled, *The Falsity of Human Virtues*. This genius says, there is no such thing as virtue; but, at the close of every chapter, kindly refers his readers to Christian charity: so that, according to M. Esprit, neither Cato, nor Aristides, nor Marcus Aurelius, nor Epictetus, were good men; and the reason is, these are only to be found among Christians. Again, among Christians, the Catholics are the only virtuous; and, among the Catholics, the Jesuits, (enemies to the Oratorians,)

should have been excepted; therefore, there is scarcely any virtue on earth, but among the enemies of the Jesuits!

This Sieur Esprit sets out with saying, that prudence is not a virtue; and his reason is, because it is often mistaken: which is as much as to say, Cæsar was nothing of a soldier, because he had the worst of it at Dyrachium. Had this reverend gentleman been a philosopher, he would have treated of prudence, not as a virtue, but a talent, a happy and useful quality: for a villain may be very prudent, and I have known such. What folly to pretend, that virtue is the portion only of us, and our partisans!

What is virtue? my friend. It is doing good. Do me some, and that is enough; your motive you may keep to yourself. How! according to you, there is no difference, between the president De Thou and Ravaillac; between Cicero and the wretch Popilius, whose life he had saved, and who yet hired himself to cut off his head? You will pronounce Epictetus and Porphyry, to be rascals, because they did not hold with our doctrines? Such insolence is quite shocking: but I have done, lest I grow warm.

FANATICISM

Is, to supersition, what delirium is to fever, and fury to anger: he who has ecstasies and visions, who takes dreams for realities, and imaginations for prophecies, is an enthusiast; and he, who sticks not at supporting his folly by murder, is a fanatic. Bartholomew Diaz, a fugitive at Nuremberg, who was firmly convinced, that the pope is the Anti-christ of the revelations, and that he has the mark of the beast, was only an enthusiast; whereas, his brother, who set out from Rome, with the intention of murdering him, and who actually did murder him, for God's sake, was one of the most execrable fanatics that superstition could form.

Polieuctes, who, on a Pagan festival, went into the temple, pulling down and breaking the images and other ornaments, showed himself a fanatic, less horrible, indeed, than Diaz, but equally rash and imprudent. The murderers of Francis, duke of Guise, of William, prince of Orange, of the kings, Henry III. and Henry IV. and of many others, were demoniacs, agitated by the same evil spirit as Diaz.

The most detestable instance of fanaticism, is that of the citizens of Paris, who, on the feast of St. Bartholomew could

massacre their fellow-citizens for not going to mass. Some are fanatics in cool blood: these are the judges, who can sentence people to death, without any other guilt, than for not being of their way of thinking: they are the more guilty and deserving of universal execration, as, not being under a fit of rage, like the Clements, the Chatels, the Ravaillacs, the Gerards, and the Damiens, one would think they might listen to reason.

When once fanaticism has touched the brain, the distemper is desperate. I have seen convulsionists, who, in speaking of the miracles of St. Paris, grew hot involuntarily; their eyes glared, they trembled in all their limbs, their countenances were disfigured with rancour, and they, unquestionably, would have killed any one who had contradicted them.

The only remedy to this infectious disease is, a philosophic temper, which, spreading through society, at length softens manners, and obviates the accesses of the distemper; for, whenever it gets ground, the best way is to fly from it, and stay till the air be purified. Laws and religion are no preservative against this mental pestilence. Religion, so far from being a salutary aliment in these cases, in infected brains, becomes a poison. These unhappy creatures dwell continually on the example of Ehud, who assassinated king Eglon; of Judith, who cut off Holophernes's head, when lying with him; and of Samuel, hewing king Agag in pieces. They are not aware, that these instances, however respectable in antiquity, are abominable in our times: they foment their phrenzy with religion, which absolutely condemns it. The laws, likewise, have proved very ineffectual against this spiritual rage; it is like reading an order of council to a lunatic. They are firmly persuaded, that the spirit which actuates them, is above all law, and that their enthusiasm is the only one they are to regard. What can be answered to a person, who tells you, he had rather obey God than man; and who, in consequence of this, is certain of gaining heaven, by cutting your throat?

The instigators of fanatics are generally designing knaves: they are like the old man of the mountain, who, according to history, gave weak persons a foretaste of the joys of paradise, promising them an eternity of such enjoyments, if they would murder all those whom he should name. There has been but one religion in the whole world clear of fanaticism, which is that of the Chinese literati. The sects of philosophers, instead of being infected with this pestilence, were a remedy and preservative against it; for the effect of philosophy is, to compose the soul, and fanaticism is incompatible with tranquillity.

As to our holy religion having been so often corrupted, by these infernal impulses, it is the folly of man that is to blame.

FRAUD.

WHETHER PIOUS FRAUDS ARE ALLOWABLE.

BAMBABEF, the fakir, one day met a disciple of Confutzee (Confucius), whose name was Ouang. Bambabef maintained that it is proper sometimes to deceive the people, and Ouang insisted that we ought never to deceive any one. The substance of their dispute was as follows:—

Bamb. We are to imitate the Supreme Being, who does not show us things as they are: he shows us the sun in a diameter of only two or three feet, though that body be a million of times larger than the earth: he shows us the moon and the stars, as fixed on one and the same blue ground, though they are at different and immense distances: he would have a square tower appear round to us afar off: he would have fire seem hot to us, though it be neither hot nor cold: in a word, he encompasses us with errors suitable to our nature.

Ouang. What you call error is no such thing. That sun, which is placed millions of millions of *lis** from our globe, is not that sun we see; we cannot have any real sight, but of the sun which reflects itself on our retina in a determinate angle. Our eyes were not given us for the knowledge of dimensions and distances; this requires other instruments and operations.

[*Bambabef stared at such language; but Ouang, being endowed with uncommon patience, explained to him the theory of optics; and Bambabef, having a clear head, acquiesced in the demonstrations produced by Confutzee's disciple, and then returned to the dispute in these terms.*]

Bamb. If God does not deceive us by the medium of our senses, as I thought, you must own, however, that physicians always cheat children for their good: they will tell them they are giving them sugar, when, at the same time, it is rhubarb: so that I, as a fakir, may deceive the people, they having no more knowledge or understanding than children.

Ouang. I have two sons, and never have I deceived them. When they are sick I say to them, this physic is very bitter,

* A *lis* signifies 124 paces.

but you must pluck up a good heart and take it: the more bitter it is, the more good it will do you; were it sweet, it would hurt you. I never allowed their governesses or preceptors to frighten them with ghosts and apparitions, with hobgoblins and wizards: and thus they are grown up to be brave and sensible young men.

Bamb. The common people are not born with the like happy talents and dispositions as your family.

Ouang. All men are alike: they are born with the same propensities; it is the fakirs who vitiate human nature.

Bamb. We do teach them errors, I own; but it is for their good: we make them believe that if they do not buy of our consecrated nails, or expiate their sins by giving us money, they will in the next world be post-horses, dogs, or lizards. This terrifies them into goodness.

Ouang. Are you not aware that this is perverting the poor people? Reasoning is not so scarce among them as is imagined. There are great numbers who reflect; who laugh at your nails, your miracles and superstitions; and who know better than their being changed into lizards or post-horses. What is the consequence? They have sense to see that you preach up a sophisticated religion, but not enough to raise themselves to a pure religion, free from superstition and folly, such as ours. Their passions lead them to believe there is nothing in religion, the only religion taught them being manifestly ridiculous; and thus you share in all the guilt into which they plunge themselves.

Bamb. Not in the least; for we only teach them a good morality.

Ouang. You would get yourselves stoned to death were you to preach a false morality. Men are of such a make, that amidst all their iniquity they will not bear the preaching of it to them. Absurd fables should not be intermixed with good morality; for thus by your impostures, which might as well be suppressed, you weaken that morality which, for self-preservation, you are obliged to teach.

Bamb. How! do you imagine there is any such thing as teaching truth to the people without calling in fables?

Ouang. To be sure I do. Our literati are of the same texture as our tailors, weavers and farmers. They worship one God, the creator of all things; who rewards and punishes: their religion is not darkened with absurd systems, nor disfigured with fantastical ceremonies; and much less wickedness is there among the literati than among the common

people. Wherefore, then, do you not condescend to instruct your artificers as we instruct our literati?

Bamb. That would be idle indeed; as if they were to have all the good-breeding and knowledge of a counsellor: that is neither possible nor proper. White bread for masters; and brown bread will go down with servants.

Ouang. All men, I own, should not have an equal stock of knowledge; but some points there are necessary to all: it is necessary that all men should be just; and the surest method to make them so, is to teach them religion, without superstition.

Bamb. A specious scheme, only impracticable. Think you that for men to believe a rewarding and punishing God, will do the business? You say that the sensible part of the people are offended at my fables; and as little will they digest your bare truths. They will say, how am I certain that God punishes and rewards? Your proofs? Where is your mission? What miracles have you done for me to believe you? It is you they will flout at, and not me.

Ouang. There lies your mistake. Because they reject dangerous absurdities and fictions shocking to common sense, you fancy they will not admit a doctrine highly probable, conducive to virtue, productive of the greatest benefit to all mankind, and perfectly consonant with human reason?

The people are thorougly inclined to refer to their magistrates, when the belief recommended by these is rational, they readily close with it. Miracles are not necessary to enforce belief of a just God, to whom all hearts are open: the idea is too natural to be long opposed. To tell precisely how, and in what manner, God will punish and reward, is out of the question. Believe him just, and that is enough. I assure you, I have seen whole cities with scarcely any other tenet, and no where have I observed so much virtue.

Bamb. Fair and softly: those same cities swarm with philosophers who deny both rewards and punishments.

Ouang. You must withal own, that those philsophers will much more peremptorily deny your inventions; so that makes but little on your side. As for philosophers differing from my principles, they may still be good men, still as sedulous in the cultivation of virtue, which is to be embraced from love, and not out of fear. But I aver, that no philosopher can ever be assured that Providence has not in store punishments for the wicked, and recompences for the good: for should they ask me, who told me that God punishes? my answer is, who

told them that God does not punish? In short the philosopher, I dare say, instead of opposing me, would second me. Are you inclined to be a philosopher?

Bamb. Very much so: but not a word of it to the fakirs.

FREEDOM OF SENTIMENT.

In the year 1707, about the time the English gained the battle of Saragossa, protected Portugal, and gave to Spain a king, my lord Valiant, a general officer, who had been wounded in fight, had retired to Bareges, for the benefit of the waters. The count Medroso, who had fallen from his horse behind the baggage-waggons, a league and a half from the field of battle, had repaired also to the same place. The latter had been well acquainted with the inquisition, on which account his lordship entered one day, after dinner, into the following conversation with him:—

Val. And so, count, you have been an officer in the inquisition? You must have been engaged in a most villanous employment.

Med. Very true, my lord; but, as I had rather be their officer than their victim, I preferred the misfortune of burning my neighbour, to that of being roasted myself.

Val. What a horrible alternative! Your countrymen were a hundred times happier under the yoke of the Moors, who permitted you to indulge yourselves freely in superstition, and, imperious as they were as conquerors, they never dreamed of exercising that strange prerogative, of enslaving souls.

Med. We are not permitted now either to write, speak, or even to think. If we speak, it is easy to misinterpret our words, and still much more so if we write. And though we cannot be condemned at an *auto-da-fe*, for our secret thoughts, we are threatened to lie burning for ever, by the command of God himself if we dare to think otherwise than the Dominicans. They have persuaded the government also, that if we had common sense, the state would soon be in a combustion, and the nation become the most unhappy people upon earth.

Val. And do you believe that the English are so unhappy, who cover the ocean with their ships, and came from the other end of Europe to fight your battles for you? Do you find that the Dutch, who have stripped you of almost all your discoveries in India, and who now are among your protectors, are really so abandoned by heaven for having given free

liberty to the press, and converted the thoughts of mankind into a profitable species of commerce? Was the Roman empire the less powerful for permitting Cicero to write his sentiments freely?

Med. Cicero! who is he? I never heard of his name before. We hear nothing of your Ciceros, but of our holy father, the pope, and St. Anthony of Padua. Nay, I have hitherto been told that the Romish religion is demolished, if men once begin to think for themselves.

Val. How are you to believe this, who are assured that your church is of divine institution, and that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it? If this be true, nothing can ever destroy it.

Med. That is true; but it may be reduced to almost nothing. Thus, it is owing to this *thinking*, that Sweden, Denmark, England, and the greatest part of Germany, labour under the terrible misfortune of being no longer subject to the pope. It is even said, that if men thus continue to follow the light of their own mistaken understandings, they will be contented soon with the simple adoration of God, and the mere practice of moral virtue. If the gates of hell should prevail so far as this, what would become of the holy office?

Val. Had the primitive Christians been thus prohibited from thinking, Christianity would certainly never have been established.

Med. I do not rightly understand what you mean.

Val. I mean to say, that if Tiberius and the rest of the emperors had encouraged Dominicans to prevent the primitive Christians from the use of pen and ink, nay, had not the privilege of thinking freely been long enjoyed in Rome, it had been impossible for the Christians to have established their tenets. If then the first establishment of Christianity was owing to this liberty of thinking, how contradictory and absurd is it to endeavour to destroy that basis, on which your church itself was first founded! If any proposal regarding your worldly interest be made to you, do not you consider some time before you adopt it? And what can be more interesting to a man in this world, than that of his eternal happiness or misery in the next? There are above a hundred different religions upon earth that condemn you and your tenets as absurd, impious, and damnable. Enter into an examination therefore of those tenets.

Med. How should I be able to examine them? I am no Dominican.

Val. But you are a man, and that is sufficient.

Med. Alas! you are much more a man than I am.

Val. You have nothing to do but to learn to think; you were born with a capacity for it; and though, when a bird in the cage of the Inquisition, the holy office clipped your wings, they may grow again. A man who does not understand geometry, may learn it. There is nobody that cannot be, in some degree, instructed. It is a shame to trust our souls in the hands of those we should be afraid to trust with our money. Come, come, venture to think for yourself.

Med. But they say, that if all the world thus thought for themselves, it would be productive of strange confusion.

Val. Quite the contrary, I assure you. Does not every one speak his mind freely of the entertainment at a theatre, and is the representation interrupted by it? But if any insolent protector of a bad poet should start up, and insist upon the audience approving what they might dislike, what would be the consequence? They would naturally go to loggerheads, as they sometimes do at the playhouses in London. The exercise of such tyranny over the minds of men has been productive, in a great degree, of the miseries that have befallen mankind. We have been happy in England since every man has been at liberty to speak his own mind.

Med. And we are very quiet at Lisbon, where nobody is permitted to say any thing.

Val. You are quiet, but you are not happy. Your tranquillity is that of galley-slaves, who tug the oar, and keep time in silence.

Med. Do you think, then, that my soul is in the galley?

Val. Yes; and I would deliver you from thence.

Med. But what if I find myself quite at ease there?

Val. Nay, then you deserve to remain.

FRIENDSHIP

Is a tacit contract between two sensible and virtuous persons; I say *sensible*, for a monk or a hermit may not be wicked, yet live strangers to friendship. I add *virtuous*, for the wicked have only accomplices: the voluptuous have companions; the designing have associates; the men of business have partners; the politicians form a factious band; the bulk of idle men have connexions; princes have courtiers; but virtuous men alone have friends. Cethegus was Cataline's accomplice, and Mecenas was Octavius's courtier; but Cicero was Atticus's friend.

What is implied in this contract between two tender and ingenuous souls? Its obligations are stronger and weaker, according to their degree of sensibility, and the number of good offices performed, &c.

The enthusiasm of friendship was stronger among the Greeks and Arabs, than among us. The tales on friendship composed by those people are admirable; we have nothing like them: in every thing we are somewhat dry and jejune.

Among the Greeks friendship was a point of religion, and an object of the legislature. The Thebans had a regiment called the regiment of lovers, and a fine one I dare say it was; some have mistaken it for a regiment of Sodomites, but this is a gross error, taking an accessory for a principal. Among the Greeks, friendship was recommended, both by the law and by religion. Unhappily their manners allowed of pederasty; but the law is not to be charged with any shameful abuses.

GLORY.

BEN-AL-BETIF, that worthy superior of the dervises, one day said to them, Brethren, it is very fit that you should often use that sacred form in our Koran, "In the name of the most merciful God;" for God showeth mercy, and you learn to practise it by the frequent repetition of words recommending a virtue, without which there would be few people remaining on earth: but, brethren, far be it from you to imitate the presumption of those who are continually boasting, that what they do is for the glory of God. When a raw scholar maintains a thesis on the Categories, before some furred ignoramus of a president, he is sure to write, in large characters, at the head of his thesis, *Ek allha, abron doxa, Ad majoram Dei gloriam.* So a devout Mussulman, having caused his saloon to be white-washed, must have the like folly engraved over the door. A Saka likewise carries water to promote God's glory. This is a devout practice of a profane custom. What would you say of a pitiful chiaoux who, when emptying our sultan's close-stool, should bawl out, To the greater glory of our invincible monarch? Now, certainly, the difference is greater between the sultan and God, than between the pitiful chiaoux and the sublime sultan.

Ye poor earth-worms, called men, what have you in common with the glory of the Infinite Essence? Can he desire glory? Can he receive any from you? Can he enjoy it?

How long, ye two-legged, featherless animals, will you make God in your likeness! Being yourselves vain and fond of glory, God must needs be so too! Were there several Gods, each of them would be desirous of the applause of his equals, and in that would consist the glory of a god. If infinite grandeur might be brought into a comparison with the extremity of meanness, such a god would be like king Alexander, or Scander, who would enter the list against kings only: but you, poor creatures, what glory can you give to God? Forbear any longer to profane his sacred name. An emperor, named Octavius Augustus, ordered no panegyrics to be made on him, in the schools of Rome, that his name might not be debased. But you can neither debase nor exalt the Supreme Being. Prostrate yourselves, and worship in silence.

Thus spoke Ben-al-betif, and the dervises shouted, Glory to God! well has Ben-al-betif spoken.

GOD.

In the reign of Arcadius, Logomacos, a theologue of Constantinople, went into Scythia, and stopped at the foot of mount Caucasus, in the fertile plains of Zephirim, bordering on Colchis. The good old man, Dondindac, was, after a light repast, kneeling in his large hall, between his vast sheep-fold and his ample barn, with his wife, his five sons, and five daughters, some of his kindred, and his domestics, all chaunting the praises of the bounteous Giver of all good things. "Ho! what art thou about Idolater?" said Logomacos to him. "I am no idolater," said Dondindac. "An idolater thou must be," replied Logomacos; "as being a Scythian, or at least, no Greek. Well, and what wast thou gabbling in thy Scythian jargon?"—"All languages are alike in God's ear," answered the Scythian: "we were singing his praises."—"Very extraordinary indeed," added the theologue; "a Scythian family worshipping God, without any previous instruction from us!" He soon entered into conversation with Dondindac, for the theologue had a smattering of the Scythian, and the other understood a little Greek. This conversation is lately come to light, in a manuscript kept in the imperial library at Constantinople.

Logo. I will see whether thou knowest thy catechism: why prayest thou to God?

Dond. Because it is just and proper to worship the Supreme Being, as of him we hold all we have.

Logo. Pretty well for a barbarian: and what askest thou of him?

Dond. I thank God for the good things he gives me, and even for the crosses with which he tries me. But, as for asking any thing of him, that is what I never presume to do: he knows what we stand in need of better than ourselves; besides, I should be afraid to ask for sun-shine, when rain would better suit my neighbour.

Logo. Ah! I apprehended we should soon have some nonsense or other from him. Let us take a retrospect of things. Who told thee there is a God?

Dond. All nature.

Logo. That is nothing: what idea hast thou of God?

Dond. That he is my creator, my master, who will reward me if I do well, and punish me if I do amiss.

Logo. That is but trivial and low: let us come to the essential. Is God infinite, *secundum quid*, or in his essence?

Dond. I do not understand you.

Logo. Stupid dolt! Is God in a place, or out of all place, or is he every where?

Dond. I know nothing of that: it may be just as you please.

Logo. Ignorant wretch! Well; can he make what has been, not to have been; or that a stick shall not have two ends? Is futurity to him as future or as present? How does he do to bring nothing into existence, and to annihilate existence?

Dond. I never bestow a thought on those things.

Logo. What an oaf is this! well, I must let myself down; I must suit myself to the meanness of his intellects. Tell me, friend, believest thou that matter can be eternal?

Dond. What is it to me whether it exists from eternity or not? I did not exist from eternity. God is always my master and instructor. He has given me the knowledge of justice, and it is my duty to act accordingly. I do not desire to be a philosopher: let me be a man.

Logo. What a plague it is to have to do with such thick-headed creatures! I must proceed gradually with him. What is God?

Dond. My sovereign, my judge, my father.

Logo. That is not what I ask you. What is his nature?

Dond. To be powerful and good.

Logo. But whether is he corporeal or spiritual?

Dond. How should I know?

Logo. What! not know what a spirit is?

Dond. Not I, in the least; and what would I be the better for such knowledge? Will it mend my morals, make me a better husband, a better father, a better master, or a better member of society?

Logo. A man must be absolutely taught what a spirit is; since it is—it is—it is.—Well, we will let that alone till another time.

Dond. I fancy, instead of being able to tell me what it is, you will rather tell me what it is not. But, after so much questioning, may I take the freedom to ask you a question? I was, formerly, in one of your temples, and why do you paint God with a long beard?

Logo. That is a very abstruse question, and the solution of which would be above your comprehension, without some preliminary instruction.

Dond. Before you enter on your instruction, I must tell you a circumstance, which I hope never to forget. I had just built a summer-house at the end of my garden; and one day, sitting in it, I heard a mole and a chafer descanting: "A superb edifice it certainly is," said the mole; "and of very great parts must that mole have been who built it."—"A mole forsooth! I say a mole too!" quoth the chafer: "the architect of that building could be no other than some chafer of an extraordinary genius." This colloquy put me on a resolution never to dispute.

GOVERNMENTS, WHICH IS THE BEST?

I NEVER yet knew any man who had not governed some state or other. I do not speak of their high mightinesses the ministers, who govern in reality, some two or three years, others six months, and others as many weeks; I mean all other men, who, over a bottle, or in their closet, display their system of government, and reform navy, army, law, finances, and church.

Abbe Bourzeis took upon himself to govern France, about the year 1645, under the name of cardinal Richelieu, and composed that Political Will, in which he is for having the nobility enrolled in the cavalry for three years; the land-tax to be paid to the chambers of accounts and the parliament, and taking away from the king the produce of the salt-tax. In order to take the field with 50,000 men, he makes it a point of economy, to raise 100,000. He affirms, that "Provence alone, has many more fine sea-ports than Spain and Italy put together."

This ecclesiastical schemer had not travelled. Besides, his work swarms with anachronisms and errors. As he makes cardinal Richelieu speak what he never did speak, so his signature is no less different from that of the cardinal. Further, he fills a whole chapter with saying, that "reason is to be the rule of a state;" and labours to prove such a notable discovery. This work of darkness, this bantling of the abbe Bourzeis, passed a long time for cardinal Richelieu's legitimate offspring, and all the academicians, in their inauguration speeches, never failed to pour forth the most excessive eulogiums on this master-piece of policy!

One St. Gratien de Courtils, seeing the great success of cardinal Richelieu's Political Legacy, fell to writing Colbert's Legacy, with a fine letter to the king; whereas, had that minister drawn up such a Will, he ought to have been declared *non compos*; yet have some authors thought proper to quote this composition. Another starveling, too mean to be known, published Louvois's Will, which, if such a thing could be, was still worse than Colbert's; and, by the fertile brain of one abbe de Chevremont, duke Charles of Lorraine, likewise, had his Will. We have also had the political testaments of cardinal Alberoni, marshal Belleisle, and lastly, that of Mandrin.

M. de Boisguilebert, author of *Le Detail de la France*, printed in 1695, troubled the public with the impracticable project of the regal tenths, under the name of marshal Vauban.

One Jonchere, a crazy starveling, met with a bookseller, who published a scheme of his on the finances, in four volumes; and some blockheads have quoted this production as a work of the treasurer-general, on a notion that a book of finances, written by a treasurer, must be a choice piece.

It must, however, be owned, that very wise men, and men, perhaps, every way qualified for government, have, in France, in Spain, and in England, written on political administration, and great good have their books done; not that they have amended the ministers, who were in place when those books came out; for a minister never amends, there is no changing him; he has taken his bent; and for informations and counsels, the stream of business carries him away, so as not to leave leisure to listen to them: but young persons, designed for employment, and princes themselves, are instructed by these good books: and thus the second generation reaps the benefit of them.

The advantages and disadvantages of all governments have,

of late, been closely canvassed. Now, you who have travelled, and read, and seen a great deal, pray in which state, and under what form of government would you choose to be born? I fancy, a French nobleman, with a large landed estate, would not be sorry to have been born in Germany, as there, instead of being a subject, he would be a sovereign. A peer of France, doubtless, would be very glad to have the privileges of the English peerage, as raising him to a share in the legislature.

For the lawyer and the financier, France is the country which, of all others, brings the most grist to their mill.

But what country would a wise man, of a free turn of mind, unprejudiced, and of a middling fortune, make choice of?

A member of the council of Pondicherry, a gentleman of some learning, was returning into Europe over-land, in company with a Bramin, who knew more than most of his brethren. "How do you like the grand Mogul's government?" said the counsellor. "Nothing more abominable," answered the Bramin; "but how can a state be well governed by Tartars? If our rayas, our omrahs, and our nabobs, are entirely satisfied and easy, it is otherwise with the people, and millions of people are something."

The counsellor and the Bramin traversed all Upper Asia, amidst political conversations. "An observation occurs to me," said the Bramin, "that all this vast part of the world does not afford one republic."—"Here was, anciently, that of Tyre," said the counsellor; "but it did not continue long; then there was another towards Arabia Petræa, in a small nook, called Palestine, if the honourable appellation of republic may be given to a tribe of robbers and usurers, sometimes governed by judges, sometimes by a sort of kings, sometimes by high-priests, subdued and enslaved seven or eight times, and, at last, driven out of the country which it had usurped."—"I apprehend," said the Bramin, "that republics are very scarce in all parts: it is but seldom that men deserve to govern themselves. This happiness must belong only to small nations, concealing themselves in islands, or amidst mountains, like rabbits, shunning carnivorous beasts, but at length discovered and devoured."

The two travellers being come into Asia Minor, the counsellor observed to the Bramin, "Could you think there had ever been a republic in a corner of Italy, which subsisted above five hundred years, and made itself mistress of this Asia Minor, Asia, Africa, Greece, the Gauls, Spain, and all Italy?"—

"I dare say it soon became changed to a monarchy," said the Bramin. "Very right," said the other; "but that monarchy is long since come to nothing; and every day fine dissertations are composed to find out the causes of its declension and catastrophe."—"You give yourselves a deal of needless trouble," said the Indian; "that empire fell because it existed: every thing will fall. I hope in God, the empire of the great Mogul will one day have its fall."—"Now we are upon this head," said the European, "do you think honour is most necessary in a monarchy, and virtue in a republic?" The Indian, after the meaning of the word honour had, at his desire, been explained to him, answered, that honour was of greater necessity in a republic, and virtue in a monarchy. "For," says he, "a man who set up to be chosen by the people, will not be chosen, if he be reputed a man of no honour: whereas, at court he may easily insinuate himself into a post, according to the maxim of a great prince, that a courtier to make his fortune, should be without honour or pride. As to virtue, an immense deal of it is requisite to dare speak truth at court; a virtuous man is much more at ease in a republic; there is nobody to flatter."—"It is your opinion," said the native of Europe, "that laws and religions are made for climates, as furs suit Moscow, and gauze stuffs, Delhi?"—"To be sure," said the Bramin; "all laws relative to the human constitution, are calculated for the climate where we live; one wife will do for a German, a Persian must have three or four. It is the same with religious rites. Were I a Christian, how could I say mass in my province, which affords neither bread nor wine? As to articles of faith, that is another case; in these, the climate is out of the question. Did not your religion commence in Asia, from whence it has been expelled? and again, is it not established about the Baltic Sea, where it was once unknown?"—"In what state, under what government should you like best to live?" said the counsellor. "Any where but in my own country," said his companion; "and many Siamese, Tonquinese, Persians, and Turks, have I met with, who said the very same thing."—"But tell me, in what particular state you would preferably like to spend your days?" The Bramin answered, "In that where obedience is paid only to the laws." "That is an old answer," said the counsellor. "And not the worse for that," rejoined the Bramin. "But where is that country?" demanded the Pondicherrian. "It must be sought for," replied the Bramin.

GRACE.

Ye sacred counsellors of modern Rome, ye illustrious and infallible theologists, no person has more respect for your decisions, than myself: but, were Paulus Emilius, Scipio, Cato, Cicero, Cæsar, Titus, Trajan, and Marcus Aurelius, to revisit that Rome, which they formerly raised to some consideration, you must own they would be a little staggered at your determinations respecting grace. What would they say to your debates on St. Thomas's grace of health; on Catejan's medicinal grace; on external and internal grace; on gratuitous, sanctifying, actual, habitual, co-operating grace; on effectual grace, which is sometimes ineffectual; on sufficient grace, often insufficient; on versatile and congruous grace; sincerely, would they understand it more than yourselves or I?

Those illustrious personages would be quite at a loss, without your sublime instructions. I think I hear them say, Reverend fathers, you are stupendous geniuses; we foolishly conceived the eternal Being never to be guided by particular laws, like mean mortals, but by his own general laws, eternal like himself. It never came into any of our heads, that God was like a brain-sick master, giving a comfortable farm to one slave, and denying necessary food to another; ordering one slave without a hand, to knead dough, a dumb slave to read to him, and a cripple to be his courier.

Every thing from God is grace; by his grace the globe, which we dwell in, was formed; by his grace, the trees grow, and animals are nourished; but, if a wolf finds a lamb in his way, to make a good meal of, and another wolf is famishing, will any one say that God has shown particular grace to the former wolf? Has he, by a preventing grace, been busied in causing one oak to grow preferably to another oak, which has withered for want of sap? If all beings throughout all nature, are subject to general laws, how can any single species of creatures be exempt from those laws?

Why should the absolute Master of all have been more intent on disposing the inside of one man alone, than in conducting all the other parts of nature? From what humour or fickleness should he make any alteration in the heart of a Courlander or a Biscayan, when he is seen not to make the least alteration in the laws, which he has impressed on all the heavenly bodies?

How weak is it to suppose, that he is continually making, unmaking, and re-making, sentiments in us! and what pre-

sumption is it to think ourselves privileged above all other beings! Further, it is only for those, who observe confession, that all these mutations are invented. A Savoyard, or native of Bergamo, shall, on Monday, have the grace to bestow twelve sous, to have a mass said; on Tuesday, grace will fail him, and he will go to the tavern; on Wednesday, he shall have co-operating grace, which will send him away to confession, but without the efficacious grace of perfect contrition; Thursday, it will be a sufficient grace, which will prove insufficient. God shall be continually at work in the head of this Savoyard, sometimes forcibly, other times weakly, without minding any other thing upon earth, without caring what becomes of the inside of the Indians and Chinese. Really, my reverend fathers, if you have a spark of reason left, does not this system appear to you prodigiously ridiculous?

Wretches, behold the oak towering to the clouds; look down on that rush, bending at its feet; you will not say that efficacious grace has been given to the oak, and denied to the rush? Lift up your eyes to the heavens; see the eternal Demiurgus creating millions of worlds, all gravitating towards each other by general and eternal laws! Behold the same light reflected from the sun to Saturn, and from Saturn to us; and amidst this harmony of so many luminous bodies, in a course amazingly rapid, amidst this general obedience of all nature, I defy you to believe, that God minds giving a versatile grace to sister Theresa, and a concomitant grace to sister Agnes.

Thou atom, to whom a stupid atom has said, that the Eternal has particular laws for some atoms in thy neighbourhood; that he gives his grace to this, and refuses it to that; and that, which has not grace to-day, shall have it to-morrow; never let such impious folly come from thy lips. God has created the universe, and does not concern himself about making new winds, to shake some bits of straw in a corner of that universe. Theologists are like Homer's warriors, who thought that the gods sometimes fought on their side, and sometimes against them. Homer is to be considered as a poet, otherwise we make him a blasphemer.

These are Marcus Aurelius's words, not mine; for God, who inspires you, has given me grace to believe all you say, all you have said, and all you shall say.

THE HEAVENS,

OR SKY, ACCORDING TO THE ANCIENTS.

A SILK-WORM might as well give the name of heaven to the little down which surrounds its shell, as the ancients give that appellation to the atmosphere, which, as M. Fontenelle, in his *Plurality of Worlds*, prettily says, is the down of our shell.

The vapours which exhale from our seas and land, and form clouds, meteors, and thunder, were at first taken for the residence of the gods. Homer always brings down the deities in golden clouds; and thence it is that our painters still represent them seated on a cloud: but it being very proper that the master of the gods should live in greater state than the others, he was provided with an eagle to carry him, the eagle flying higher than any other bird.

The ancient Greeks seeing that princes lived in citadels, built on the top of some mountain, conceived that the gods might likewise have their citadel, and placed it in Thessalia, on mount Olympus, the summit of which is sometimes hid in the clouds, so that their palace was even with their heaven.

Afterwards, the stars and planets, which seemed fixed to the azure arch of our atmosphere, became the mansions of deities, seven of whom had their respective planets, the others taking up with what quarter they could find. The general council of the gods was held in a large saloon, to which they went by the milky-way; for men having council-chambers on earth, the gods, to be sure, should have one in the heavens.

When the Titans, (a kind of creature between the gods and men,) declared war, and not without some grounds, against those deities, to recover part of their inheritance, (being on the father's side, the sons of Cœlum and Terra,) they only heaped two or three mountains one on the other, concluding that would be full enough for them to reduce the citadel of Olympus, together with the heavens:

> "Nor were the gods themselves more safe above:
> Against beleaguer'd heaven the giants move.
> Hills piled on hills, on mountains mountains lie,
> To make their mad approaches to the sky."

This absurd system of physics was of prodigious antiquity: yet certain it is, that the Chaldeans had as just ideas of what is called the heavens, as we ourselves. They placed the sun

in the centre of our planetary world, and nearly at the *same* distance we have found it to be; and they held the revolution of the earth, and of all the planets round that body. This we are informed of by Aristarchus of Samos; and it is the true system of the world, since revived by Copernicus. But the philosophers, to be the more respected by sovereigns and people, or rather to avoid being persecuted, kept the secret to themselves.

The language of error is so familiar to men, that we still give the name of heavens to our vapours, and to the space between the earth and moon. We say, to go up to heaven, as we say, the sun turns round, though we know it does not; probably we are the heaven to the moon, and every planet makes the neighbouring planet its heaven. Had Homer been asked to which heaven the soul of Sarpedon went, and where that of Hercules was, the poet would have been a little puzzled, and eluded the question by some harmonious verses.

What certainty was there, that the aerial soul of Hercules would have had a better time of it in Venus, or Saturn, than on our globe? It is not to be supposed that its residence was appointed in the sun: that place would have been too hot. After all, what did the ancients mean by the heavens? They knew nothing of the matter; they were perpetually bawling, Heaven and earth; which is just as much as to cry, infinitude and an atom. Properly speaking, there is no such thing as the heavens: there is a prodigious number of vast globes, rolling in the void expanse, and our globe rolls like the others.

The ancients thought that the way to the heavens was by ascent: no such thing; the celestial globes are sometimes above our horizon, and sometimes below: thus, supposing Venus was returning from Paphos to her planet, after its setting, the goddess, relatively to our horizon, instead of going up, went down; and in such a case we ought to say, to go down to heaven. But the ancients were not so nice; their notions, in every thing relating to natural philosophy, were vague, uncertain, and contradictory. Immense volumes have been written, to know what their opinions were on many such questions; whereas five words would have done—*they never thought of it.*

Here, however, we must except a few wise men; but they came late: few opened their minds freely, and those who did, the empyrics on earth took care to despatch to heaven the shortest way.

A writer, I think his name is Pluche, has pretended to make

Moses a great natural philosopher; another before him, in a piece called *Cartesius Mosaizans*, has reconciled Moses with Descartes. According to him, Moses first found out the vortices and the subtile matter; but it is well known, that God meant Moses for a great legislator and a great prophet, and not for a professor of physics. He instructed the Jews in their duty, and not a word in philosophy. Calmet, who has compiled a vast deal, and never once reflected, talks of the system of the Hebrews; but, so far was that rude people from having a system, that they had not so much as a geometry-school. The bare name was unknown to them: all they understood was brokerage and usury.

In their books we meet with some vague, incoherent ideas, on the structure of the heavens, and such as show them to have been a dull, illiterate people. Their first heaven was the air; their second, the firmament, to which the stars were fastened. This firmament was solid, and of ice, and supported the upper waters, which, at the time of the deluge, made their way out of this reservoir, through gates, sluices, and cataracts.

Over this firmament, or these upper waters, was the third heaven, or the empyreum, to which St. Paul was caught up. The firmament was a kind of demi-arch round the earth. They little thought of the sun moving round a globe, whose form they were ignorant of. When it got to the west, it had some unknown path for returning to the east; and as to its not being seen, Baron Feneste accounts for that, by saying, it came back in the night.

Further, these whimsical ideas the Hebrews had borrowed from other nations, of whom, except the Chaldean school, the greater part looked on the heavens as solid; the earth was fixed and immoveable, and, by a third, longer from east to west than from south to north, whence are derived our geographical terms, longitude and latitude. This opinion, it is evident, admitted no antipodes; accordingly St. Austin calls the notion of antipodes an absurdity; and Lactantius flatly says, "Are there any so foolish, as to believe there are men whose heads are lower than their feet?" St. Chrysostom, in his fourteenth homily, asks, "Where are they who say the heavens are moveable, and their form round?"

Lactantius again says, book iii. of his Institutions, "I could prove to you, by a multitude of arguments, that it is impossible the heavens should encompass the earth."

The author of *Spectacle de la Nature* is welcome to tell the chevalier over and over, that Lactantius and Chrysostom

were eminent philosophers; still it will be answered that they were great saints, which they may be without any acquaintance with astronomy. We believe them to be in heaven, but own that in what part of the heavens they are, we know not.

HELL.

When men came to live in society, they could not but perceive that many evil-doers escaped the severity of the laws: these could affect only open crimes; so that a curb was wanting against clandestine guilt, and religion alone could be such a curb. The Persians, the Chaldeans, the Egyptians, and the Greeks, introduced a belief of punishments after this life; and, of all ancient nations we are acquainted with, the Jews alone admitted only temporal punishments. It is ridiculous to believe, or to pretend to believe, from some very obscure passages, that the ancient Jewish laws, their Leviticus, and their Decalogues, correspond with the doctrine of future punishments, when the author of those laws says not a single word which bears any relation to that doctrine. One might justly say to the compiler of the Pentateuch, You are inconsistent with yourself: you have no more judgment than probity: you a legislator, as you style yourself! How! you conscious of a tenet so coercive, so powerful, so necessary to people, as that of hell, and yet not make it known explicitly, nor urge it? And, though received among all the nations round about you, you leave so momentous a doctrine to be guessed at by some commentators, who are not to come into existence till four thousand years after your time, and who will wrest and distort some of your words, to find in them what you never meant? Either you are an ignoramus, who do not know that this was the universal belief in Egypt, in Chaldea, and in Persia; or a very weak man if, being acquainted with this doctrine, you did not make it the basis of your religion.

The very best answer the authors of the Jewish laws could make, would be this: We own ourselves to be extremely ignorant: it was very late before we learned to write: our people, a savage and barbarous tribe, which, by our own accounts, wandered for nearly half a century amidst deserts; at length, by the most heinous violence, and most detestable cruelties ever mentioned in history, seized on a small territory. We had no intercourse with polished nations: how then could we, the most earthly-minded of all men, invent a system entirely spiritual? We used the word answering to *soul*, only to

signify *life*. We thought God and his angels to be corporeal beings: the distinction of soul and body, the idea of a life after death, can be only the result of long meditation, and refined philosophy. Ask the Hottentots and Negroes, whose country is a hundred times larger than ours, whether they know any thing of a future life. We thought we had done wonders, in persuading our people that God punished evil-doers to the fourth generation, either by the leprosy, sudden death, or the loss of what little substance a person might have possessed.

To this apology it may be replied, You have invented a system palpably ridiculous: for the evil-doer, who was in health, and whose family prospered, must necessarily laugh at you.

The apologist of the Jewish law would then rejoin, That is your mistake: for among us, where one delinquent reasoned rightly, a hundred did not reason at all. He who, on the commission of a crime, found no punishment declaring itself against him or his son, still feared for his grandson. Further, though to-day he had no putrid ulcer on him, to which, by the by, we were very subject, it was odd, that within some years but it happened to be his case: no family is without misfortunes and afflictions, and we brought the people to believe that these misfortunes were sent by a divine hand, punishing secret transgressions.

This answer admits of an easy reply: Your excuse will not hold water; for every day we see very good people seized with sickness, and, by one misfortune or other, deprived of their substance; now if there be no family totally free from all misfortunes, and if these misfortunes are divine chastisements, all the individuals of your families were then knaves and profligates.

The Jewish priests might further reply, that there are misfortunes annexed to human nature, and others sent expressly by God. But this reasoner's mouth might soon be stopped, by showing the extreme absurdity of thinking that sickness and hail are sometimes a divine punishment, and sometimes a natural effect.

At length the Pharisees and the Essenes, among the Jews, admitted the belief of a hell, in their way. This dogma the Greeks had already disseminated among the Romans, and the Christians made it a capital article of faith.

Several fathers of the church did not hold the eternity of hell torments: they thought it very hard that a poor man should be burning for ever, only for stealing a goat. Virgil

might as well have held his tongue as to say, in his sixth canto of the Eneid,

> "Unhappy Theseus, doom'd for ever there,
> Is fix'd by fate to his eternal chair."

His *ipse dixit*, that Theseus is seated in a chair, where he must sit world without end, and that this is his punishment, is protested against by many, who further think the poet to have wronged him greatly, he rather deserving a place in the Elysian fields, than in Tartarus.

Not long since an honest, well-meaning Huguenot minister advanced in his sermons, and even in print, that there would be a day of grace to the damned; that there must be a proportion between the tresspass and the penalty; and that a momentary fault could not deserve an everlasting punishment. This clement judge was deposed by a body of ministers, one of whom said to him, "Brother, I as little believe the eternity of hell torments as yourself; but, let me tell you, it is very proper that your servant-maid, your tailor, and even your attorney should believe so."

HISTORY

OF THE KINGS AND CHRONICLES OF JUDAH.

All nations have written their history, as soon as ever they knew what writing was. The Jews have also written theirs. Before they had kings, they lived under a theocracy, and were reputed to be governed by God himself.

When the Jews clamoured to have a king, like the other neighbouring nations, the prophet Samuel, whose interest it was to exclude a regal government, declared to them, in the name of God, that it was God himself whom they were rejecting. Thus, the beginning of monarchy among the Jews, was the period of their theocracy. It may, therefore, be said without blasphemy, that the history of the Jewish kings was written like that of other nations; and that God did not trouble himself to dictate the history of a people whom he no longer governed.

This opinion, however, is advanced with all possible mistrust and deference. What may be thought a confirmation of it is, that the Paralipomena, or Chronicles, very often contradict the book of Kings, both in the chronology and the events, as profane histories are known to disagree. Further, if God

continued to write the history of the Jews, we are, of course, to believe that he still writes it, the Jews being still his favourite people. They are, one day, to be converted, and apparently they may as justly look upon the history of their dispersion to be of divine composition, as to say that God wrote the history of their kings.

Another remark likewise offers itself: if God, after having been their sole king for a very long time, condescended to be their historian, it becomes us to entertain the most profound respect for all the Jews universally: the very meanest Jew pedlar is infinitely above Cæsar and Alexander. Shall we not prostrate ourselves before an old-clothes man, who proves to you that his history was written by the Deity himself, whilst all the Greek and Roman histories are but the productions of profane pagans?

If the style of the history of the books of Kings and Chronicles be divine, it does not necessarily follow that the actions related therein are also divine. David murders Uriah; Isbosheth and Mephibosheth are murdered; Absalom murders Ammon; Joab murders Absalom; Solomon murders Adonijah, his brother; Baza murders Nabab; Zimri murders Ela; Hamri murders Zimri; Ahab murders Naboth; Jehu murders Ahab and Joram; the inhabitants of Jerusalem murder Amaziah, the son of Joash; Selom, the son of Jabes, murders Zachariah, the son of Jeroboam; Manahaim murders Selom, the son of Jabes; Phaceus, the son of Romeli, murders Phaceia, the son of Manahaim; Hoshea, the son of Ela, murders Phaceus, the son of Romeli; with a multitude of other murders of less note. Thus, it must be owned, if the Holy Spirit did write this history, he has not chosen a very edifying subject.

IDOL—IDOLATER—IDOLATRY.

Idol comes from the Greek *eidos*, a figure; *eidolos*, the representation of a figure; *latreuein*, to serve, to revere, to adore. The word *adore* is originally Latin, and has various meanings; as, to put the hand to the mouth, in token of respect; to bend the body; to kneel; to salute; and, more commonly, to pay a supreme worship.

It is proper to observe here, that the Trevoux Dictionary begins this article with saying, that all the Pagans were idolaters, and that the Indians are still so. First, nobody was

called Pagan before the time of Theodosius the younger, when that appellation was given to the inhabitants of the country-towns of Italy, *Pagorum incolæ Pagani*, who retained their ancient religion. Secondly, Indostan is entirely Mahometan, and they are implacable enemies to images and idolatry. Thirdly, many people of India, who are of the ancient religion of the Parsis, a certain tribe which admits of no idols, cannot, with any propriety, be termed idolaters.

WHETHER IDOLATRY WAS EVER THE PROFESSED RELIGION OF ANY NATION.

It appears that there never was any people on the earth who took to themselves the name of idolaters. It is rather an abusive word, a term of detestation; as the Spaniards formerly used to call the French *Gavachos*, which the French returned, by calling the Spaniards *Maranas*. Had the senate of Rome, the areopagus of Athens, the court of the kings of Persia, been asked, Are you idolaters? they would hardly have known what the question meant; at least not one of them would have answered, We worship idols or images. The word *idolater*, or *idolatry*, does not occur either in Homer, Hesiod, Herodotus, or any Gentile author. Never was there any edict or law ordering idols to be worshipped, to be accounted as deities, or to be considered as such.

The Roman and Carthaginian generals at the making of a treaty, called all their gods to witness; it is in their presence, say they, that we swear to this peace. Now the statues of all these gods, their number being none of the smallest, were not in the generals' tents; but they held the gods to be, as it were, present at the actions of men, as witnesses and judges; and certainly it was not the image which made the deity.

In what light did they then look on the statues of their false deities, which stood in the temples? In the same light, if I may be allowed the expression, as we view the images of the objects of our veneration. Their error was not the worshipping a piece of wood or marble, but the worshipping a false deity, represented by the wood and marble. The difference between them and us, is not, that they had images and we have none, but that their images represented imaginary beings, and in a false religion: whereas ours represent real beings, and in a true religion. The Greeks had the statue of Hercules, and we that of St. Christopher; they had Esculapius and

his goat, and we St. Roch and his dog: they had Jupiter and his thunder-bolts, and we St. Anthony of Padua, and St. James of Compostella.

When the consul Pliny, in the exordium of his panegyric on Trajan, addresses his petitions to the *immortal gods*, he cannot be thought to mean the images, which were far from being immortal.

Neither in the latter nor the more remote times of Paganism, one single fact occurs, to conclude that they worshipped idols. Homer only mentions gods dwelling in lofty Olympus. The palladium, though it fell from heaven, was no more than a sacred pledge of the protection of Pallas: it was the goddess herself who was reverenced in the palladium.

But the Romans and Greeks kneeled down before statues, put crowns on them, decked them with flowers, burnt incense to them, and carried them in solemn state through public places. These usages we have consecrated in our religion, and yet we are not idolaters.

In times of drought, the women, after keeping a fast, carried forth the statues of the gods in public, walking barefooted, with their hair loose; and immediately, according to Petronius, the rain would pour down by pails full—*statim unceatim pluebat.* Have we not adopted this rite, which, though an abomination among the Gentiles, is doubtless genuine devotion with Catholics? How common is it, among us, to carry barefooted the shrines of saints, in order to obtain a blessing from heaven by their intercession. A Turk, or a lettered Chinese, at seeing those ceremonies might, from his ignorance, accuse us of placing our confidence in the images which we thus carry about in procession: but a word or two would undeceive him.

We are surprised at the prodigious number of declamations thundered out in all ages, against the idolatry of the Romans and the Greeks; and afterwards, our surprise is still greater, at finding that they were not idolaters.

Some temples were more privileged than others. The great Diana of Ephesus stood in higher fame than a village Diana: more miracles were performed in the temple of Esculapius, at Epidaurus, than in any other of his temples. More offerings were made to the statue of Jupiter the Olympian, than to that of the Paphlagonian Jupiter: but, since it is proper always to contrast the usages of a true religion, to those of a false worship, have not some of our altars, for ages past, been more frequented than others? What are the offerings to our lady *des Neiges*, in comparison to those made to our lady

of Loretto? It is our business to examine whether this instance affords a just pretence for charging us with idolatry, or not.

The original invention was only one Diana, one Apollo, and one Esculapius, not as many Dianas, Apollos, and Esculapiuses, as they had temples and statues. Thus it is evidenced, as far as a point of history can be, that the ancients did not hold a statue to be a deity; that the worship could not relate to the statue or idol, and consequently, that the ancients were not idolaters.

A rude, superstitious populace, incapable of reflection, either to doubt, to deny, or to believe: who flocked to the temples, as having nothing else to do, and because the little are there on a level with the great; who carried their offerings merely out of custom; who were continually talking of miracles, without having ever examined any one, and who were very little above the victims they brought; such a populace, I say, might, at the sight of the great Diana, and the thundering Jupiter, be struck with a religious horror, and without knowing it, worship the statue itself. This is no more than what has been the case with our ignorant peasants; and care is accordingly taken, to give them to understand, that it is the blessed in heaven they are to invoke for their intercession, and not figures of wood and stone; and that their worship is due to God alone.

The Greeks and Romans increased the number of their deities by apotheoses. The Greeks deified illustrious conquerors, as Bacchus, Hercules and Perseus. Rome raised altars to its emperors. Of a very different kind are our apotheoses: if we have saints, answerable to their demi-gods and secondary gods, it is without any regard to rank or conquest. We have erected temples to men, merely for their exemplary virtues, and most of whom would not have been known on earth, had they not been placed in heaven. The apotheoses of the ancients were acts of adulation, ours of respect to virtue. But these ancient apotheoses are another convincing proof that the Greeks and Romans cannot properly be called idolaters. It is manifest that they no more held a divine virtue to be residing in the statues of Augustus and Claudius, than in their medals.

Cicero, in his philosophical works, does not leave so much as the least suspicion, that any mistake could be committed with regard to the statues of the gods, so as to confound them with the deities themselves. His speakers inveigh, with great acrimony, against the established religion, but not one of them

dreams of charging the Romans with mistaking marble and brass for deities. Lucretius, who never gives any quarter to the superstitious, reproaches nobody with this folly: I must, therefore, again say it, this opinion never existed, never was thought of: nor was there ever any such thing as idolatry.

Horace introduces a statue of Priapus, saying,

> "In days of yore, our godship stood
> A very worthless log of wood;
> The joiner doubting, or to shape us
> Into a stool, or a Priapus,
> At length resolv'd, for reasons wise,
> Into a god to bid me rise."

What is to be inferred from this passage? Priapus was one of those petty deities, which were given up to the sarcasms of the jocular; and this very joke is as strong a proof as can be, that the figure of Priapus was not greatly revered, being made a scare-crow.

Dacier, commentator like, has taken care to observe, that Baruch had foretold this business, saying, they shall be whatever the artist pleases. But he might, withal, have remarked, that the like might be said of all the statues that ever existed.

A tub may be made out of a block of marble, as well as the statue of Alexander or Jupiter, or something still more respectable. The matter, of which were formed the cherubims of the holy of holies, might have equally served for the meanest purposes. A throne, or an altar, lose nothing of the reverence due to them, because the artist might have formed them into a kitchen table.

Dacier, instead of inferring that the Romans worshipped Priapus's image, and that Baruch had predicted it, ought rather to have concluded, that the Romans made a jest of it. Look into all the authors who speak of the statues of their gods, not one shall you find mentioning idolatry, but quite the contrary. You read in Martial—

> "He who the sacred fronts hath form'd in gold,
> Or e'en in marble, doth not gods unfold."

In Ovid—

> "The form of Jove adored as Jove himself."

In Statius—

> "No storied vase, no bust of paltry clay,
> The mind or will, alone, doth God display."

In Lucan—

> "Where is God's temple? is it placed on high?
> It is the earth, sea, firmament, and sky."

To enumerate all the passages in confirmation, that images were accounted images, would take up a volume. The only case which could favour an opinion, that they had any thing divine in them, was the oracular images. But certainly the current notion was, that the gods had chosen some particular altars, and particular statues, where they sometimes condescended to reside, giving audience to men, and answering them. In Homer, and in the choruses of Greek tragedies, we only meet with prayers addressed to Apollo himself, as delivering his oracles on such a mount, in such a temple, or in such a city. Throughout all antiquity, there is no vestige left of supplications made to a statue.

They who professed magic, who believed it to be a science, or who feigned to believe it, pretended to be possessed of the secret of bringing down the gods into statues; but not the great gods, only the secondary, the genii. This, Mercurius Trismegistus used to term, *making deities;* and it is refuted by St. Austin, in his *City of God.* But this very thing evidently shows the images to have had nothing divine in them, as not animated without the art of a magician. I fancy few of these were found so dexterous as to animate a statue so as to make it speak.

In a word, the images of the gods were not gods: it was Jupiter, and not his image, which hurled the thunderbolt: it was not the statue of Neptune, which agitated the sea, nor that of Apollo, which diffused light. The Greeks and Romans were Gentiles, Polytheists; but by no means idolaters.

WHETHER THE PERSIANS, THE EGYPTIANS, THE SABEANS, THE TARTARS, AND THE TURKS, HAVE BEEN IDOLATERS.—ÆRA OF THE ORIGIN OF FIGURES, CALLED IDOLS—HISTORY OF THEIR WORSHIP.

To call those nations, who worshipped the sun and stars, idolaters, is wronging them. For a long time, neither images nor temples were known among them: if they were mistaken, it was in paying to the heavenly bodies the homage due only to the Creator. Besides, the doctrine of Zoroaster, or Zerdust, as preserved in the Sadder, teaches the existence of a Supreme Being, who punishes and rewards. Now, this is very far from idolatry. The Chinese government never admitted of idols,

constantly adhering to the simple worship of Kingtien, the master of heaven. Genghis Khan, among the Tartars, cannot be charged with idolatry, never having had any such thing as an image. The Mussulmans of Greece, Asia Minor, Syria, Persia, India, and Africa, called the Christians idolaters, *Giaours*, imagining that the Christians worship images. Several images which they found at Constantinople, in St. Sophia, and in the church of the holy apostles, and others, they broke to pieces, converting the churches into mosques. Appearances, as usual, deceived them, and led them to believe, that the dedicating of temples to saints, who had formerly been men, the worshipping of their images with genuflection, and the performing of miracles in those temples, were undeniable proofs of the most arrant idolatry, yet the farthest from it in the world. The Christians, in reality, worship only one God, and, in the blessed themselves, revere only the virtue of God, acting in his saints. The Inconoclasts and the Protestants have brought the same charge of idolatry against the church of Rome, and the same answer has been given to them.

Men having very seldom precise ideas, and still more seldom expressing them in precise words, clear of all ambiguity, the name of idolaters was given to the Gentiles, and especially to the Polytheists. Immense volumes have been written, according to the multitude of varying sentiments, on the origin of worshipping God, or several gods, and under sensible representations. This multitude of books and opinions only prove the ignorance of the authors.

We know not who invented any part of our clothing, and yet we would fain know who was the first inventor of idols. What signifies a passage of Sanchoniathon, who lived before the Trojan war? What information does he give us, in saying, that the chaos, the mind, that is, the breath, being enamoured with its principles, extracted the mud from them; that he made the air luminous; that the wind Colp, and his wife Bau, begat Eon, and he begat Genos; that Cronos, their descendant, had two eyes behind as before; that he came to be god, and gave Egypt to his son Jaut? This is one of the most respectable monuments of antiquity.

Orpheus, who was prior to Sanchoniathon, gives us just as much light in his *Theogonia*, which Damascius has preserved. He represents the mundane principle in the form of a dragon, with two heads, one of a bull, and the other of a lion, with a face in the middle, which he terms *god face*, and gilded wings to the shoulders.

Yet these ideas, fantastical as they are, give us an insight

into two important truths; one, that sensible images and hieroglyphics are derived from the most remote antiquity; the other, that all ancient philosophers acknowledged a primordial principle.

As to Polytheism, common sense will tell you, that, at the commencement of mankind, that is, of weak creatures, susceptible of reason and folly, subject to every accident, to sickness and death, they soon came to a sense of their weakness and dependence: they easily conceived that there was something superior to themselves; they felt a power in the earth, which produced their food; another in the air, which often destroyed them; and another in the consuming fire, and the submerging water. What could be more natural, in men absolutely ignorant, than to fancy that there were beings which presided over these elements? What could be more natural, than to revere the invisible power, which made the sun and the stars to shine? And, on proceeding to form an idea of these superior powers, what was again more natural, than to represent them in a sensitive way? or, I may even ask, how could they go about it otherwise? Judaism, anterior to our religion, and prescribed by God himself, was full of those images, under which the deity is represented. He condescends to speak the language of men in a bush; he makes his appearance on a mountain; the heavenly spirits sent by him, all come in a human shape; in a word, the sanctuary itself is filled with cherubims, human bodies, and the wings and heads of beasts. This led Plutarch, Tacitus, Appian, and so many others, into the ridiculous mistake of upbraiding the Jews with worshipping an ass's head. Thus God, who had forbidden the painting and carving of any figure, has been pleased, nevertheless, to accommodate himself to human weakness, which requires the senses to be spoken to by images.

Isaiah, chap. vi. sees the Lord seated on a throne, and his train fills the temple. In chap. i. of Jeremiah, the Lord stretches out his hand, and touches the prophet's mouth. Ezekiel, chap. iii. sees a throne of sapphire, and God appears to him like a man seated on that throne. This imagery does not, in the least, defile the purity of the Jewish religion, which never made use of pictures, statues, and idols, as public representations of the deity.

The lettered Chinese, the Parsis, and the ancient Egyptians, had no idols; but Isis and Osiris were soon represented in figures. Bel, at Babylon, was as soon exhibited in a huge colossus. Brama was, in the Indian peninsula, a hideous kind of monster. The Greeks, above all, multiplied the names of

the deities, and, of course, the statues and temples: but ever attributing the supreme power to their Zeus, by the Latins named Jupiter, the sovereign of gods and men. The Romans imitated the Greeks; both always placed their gods in heaven, without knowing what they meant by heaven and their Olympus. These superior beings could not be supposed to reside in the clouds, which are only water. At first, seven of them were placed in the seven planets, among which was reckoned the sun; but, afterwards, the residence of all the gods was extended to the whole heavenly expanse.

The Romans had twelve great deities, six male and six female, who they distinguished by the appellation of *Dii majorum gentium:* Jupiter, Neptune, Apollo, Vulcan, Mars, and Mercury; Juno, Vesta, Minerva, Ceres, Venus, and Diana. Pluto was then omitted, and Vesta was called to supply his place.

Next were the gods, *minorum gentium*, the indigetes, or heroes: as Bacchus, Hercules, and Esculapius; the infernal deities, Pluto and Proserpine; the sea gods, as Thetis, Amphitrite, the Nereides, and Glaucus; afterwards the Dryades, the Naiades; the gods of gardens; the pastoral deities: every profession, every action of life, children, maidens, wives, and women in child-bed, all had their deity: there was even the god F—t: lastly, emperors were deified; not that these emperors, nor the god F—t, nor the goddess Pertunda, nor Priapus, nor Rumilia, the goddess of bubbies, nor Stercutius, the god of privies, were accounted the lords of heaven and earth. Some of the emperors indeed, had temples; the petty household gods were without them, but all had their image or their idol.

These were little grotesque figures, set up in a closet, by way of ornament. Old women and children were highly delighted with them; but never were these figures authorised by any public worship: every one was left to follow his own private superstition. These little idols are still found in the ruins of ancient cities.

Though we cannot fix the precise time when men began to make idols, they are, however, known to belong to the most remote antiquity. Thara, Abraham's father, used to make them at Ur, in Chaldea. Rachael purloined and carried off Laban's idols. There is no going higher.

But what did the ancient nations think of all these images? what virtue, what power did they attribute to them? Was it thought that the gods quitted heaven to come down and hide themselves in these statues? or that they imparted to them a

portion of the divine spirit, or did not impart any thing at all to them? A great deal of useless erudition has been thrown away on this point, it being evident, that every one's notions of them were proportioned to his reason, his credulity, or his fanaticism. The priests, we may be sure, would not be wanting to annex to their statues all the divinity they possibly could, in order to draw the more offerings. The philosophers, it is well known, censured these superstitions; the military made a jest of them; and the commonalty, ever ignorant and silly, knew not what it was doing. This is, in a few words, the history of all the nations to which God has not made himself known.

The premises are applicable to the worship universally paid in Egypt to an ox, and in several cities to a dog, a monkey, a cat, and onions. In all appearance, they were at first only emblems. Afterwards, a certain ox, called Apis, and a certain dog, named Anubis, were worshipped: still the people went on eating beef and onions; but what the Egyptian old women thought of sacred onions and oxen, is not cleared up.

It was not uncommon for idols to speak. On the anniversary of Cybele's festival, the city of Rome commemorated the beautiful distich, uttered by the statue, on its removal from king Attalus's palace:

> "Transport me hence, away! I go with pride,
> To worthy Rome, the place where gods reside."

The statue of Fortune had spoken. The Scipios, the Ciceros, and the Cæsars, indeed, believed nothing of the matter; but the old women, to whom Encolpus gave a crown, to buy geese and gods, might very well believe it.

The idols, likewise, pronounced oracles, the priests, concealed within the statues, speaking in the name of the deity.

Amidst so many gods, so many different theogonies and separate worships, whence is it, that no such thing as a religious war was ever known among the people called idolaters? This tranquillity was a good springing from an evil, from error itself; for every nation owning several inferior gods, peaceably allowed its neighbours to have theirs likewise. Except Cambyses's killing the ox Apis, not one instance is to be found in all profane history, of a conqueror offering any insult to the gods of a vanquished nation. The Gentiles had no exclusive religion; and all that the priests minded was to multiply offerings and sacrifices.

The first offerings were the fruits of the earth; but the

priests soon came to want animal food for their table: with their own hands they slew the victims; and, as they made themselves butchers, they became sanguinary. At length, they introduced the horrible practice of offering human victims, and especially comely boys and girls, abominations never known among the Chinese, the Parsis, or the Indians; but, at Hieropolis, in Egypt, Porphyry tells us, it was nothing extraordinary to sacrifice men.

In Taurus, strangers were sacrificed; but this savage custom being known, the priests of Taurus, it is to be supposed, did not do much business. This execrable superstition prevailed among the most ancient Greeks, the Cypriots, the Phœnicians, the Tyrians, and the Carthaginians. The Romans themselves gave into this religious guilt; and, according to Plutarch, sacrificed two Greeks and two Gauls, to expiate the incontinency of three vestals. Procopius, who was contemporary with Theodobert, king of the Francs, says, that the Francs sacrificed men on their entrance into Italy under that prince. These horrid sacrifices were common among the Gauls and Germans. There is no reading history, without being very much displeased with one's own species.

What if, among the Jews, Jephthah sacrificed his daughter, and Saul was going to slay his son; what if they, who were devoted to the Lord by anathema, and could not be redeemed, as beasts were, but were indispensably put to death; what though Samuel, a Jewish priest, cut to pieces, with a consecrated cleaver, king Agag, prisoner of war, whom Saul had spared, and sharply reproved Saul for having treated that king according to the laws of nations; what of all this? God is the sovereign of mankind, and may take away their lives when he will, as he will, and by whom he will: but men are not to put themselves on a footing with the Lord of life and death, and usurp the prerogatives of the Supreme Being.

Amidst such detestable proceedings, it is some relief to the feeling heart, to know, that in almost all those nations, called idolatrous, there was the sacred theology and the popular error, the private worship and the public ceremonies, the religion of the wise and that of the vulgar. To those who were initiated in the mysteries, the existence of one only God was preached. Of this, a sufficient testimony is the hymn attributed to the elder Orpheus, which was sung in the celebrated mysteries of Ceres Eleusina: "Contemplate the divine nature, illume thy mind, govern thy heart, walk in the path of justice, take care that the God of heaven be before thine eyes; there is none but him: he alone is self-existent; all beings derive their ex-

istence from him; he upholds them all; never has he been seen by mortals, and he sees all things."

The following passage of the philosopher Maximus, of Madaura, in his letter to St. Augustine, is likewise worth attention: "What man is so dull, so stupid, as to question the existence of an eternal, a supreme, infinite Deity, who has created nothing like himself, and is the common father of all things?"

A thousand monuments might be produced, that wise men, in all times, abhorred both idolatry and Polytheism. Epictetus, that pattern of resignation and patience, so great in so mean a condition, never speaks but of one only God. One of his maxims is this: "God has created me: God is within me: I carry him about every where. Shall I defile him with obscene thoughts, unjust actions, or infamous desires? My duty is to thank God for every thing; to praise him for every thing; and to thank, praise, and serve him continually, whilst I have life." All Epictetus's ideas turn on this principle.

Marcus Aurelius, who perhaps was, on the throne of the Roman empire, not less great than Epictetus in servitude, does indeed, often mention gods, in conformity to the current phraseology, or to express intermediate beings, between the Supreme Essence and men; but in how many passages does he show, that, in reality, he acknowledges only one eternal, infinite God? "Our souls," says he, "are an emanation of the Deity: my body, my spirits, proceed from God."

The Stoics and the Platonics held one divine and universal nature; the Epicureans denied it. The priests, in their mysteries, spoke only of one God: where, then, were the idolaters?

Besides, it is one of the great mistakes in Morery's Dictionary, to say, that in the time of Theodosius the younger, no idolaters remained, but in the remote parts of Asia and Africa. There were still, and even down to the seventh century, many Gentile nations in Italy. All Germany, north of the Weser, were strangers to Christianity in Charlemagne's time; and long after him, Poland and the whole north continued in what is called idolatry. Half Africa, all the realms beyond the Ganges, Japan, the innumerable commonalty of China, and a hundred Tartarian hordes, retain their ancient worship; whereas, in Europe, this religion is to be found only among some Laplanders, Samoiedes, and Tartars. To conclude; in the time, which we distinguish by the appellation of the middle age, the Mahometans were called Pagans; a people, who execrate images, were branded as idolaters and image-

worshippers, and it must be frankly owned that the Turks, seeing our churches crowded with images and statues, are more excusable in calling us idolaters.

JEPHTHAH; OR, HUMAN SACRIFICES.

It is clear, from the book of Judges, that Jephthah did promise to sacrifice the first person who came out of his house, in order to congratulate him on his victory against the Ammonites; and who should this prove to be but his only daughter. Hereupon he rent his garments for grief; and, after permitting her to go and lament among the hills, her misfortune in dying a maid, he actually sacrificed her.* The Jewish maidens, for a long time commemorated this event, lamenting Jephthah's daughter four days in every year. See Judges, chap. xi.

In whatever time this history was written, whether it be an imitation, or the original, of the Grecian story of Agamemnon and Iphigenia; be it prior or posterior to some similar Assyrian tale, is what I do not examine: I abide by the text: Jephthah vowed his daughter for a burnt-offering, and performed his vow.

It was expressly enjoined in the Jewish law, to sacrifice all who had been devoted to the Lord. No man shall be redeemed, but shall be put to death, without remission. The Vulgate has it, "*Non redimetur, sed morte morietur.*" Lev. xxvii. 29.

In consequence of this law it was, that Samuel hewed king Agag in pieces, though Saul had spared him; and, for his improper clemency, Saul was reproved by the Lord, and forfeited his kingdom.

Here is an evident proof of human sacrifices: no point of history can be more authentically verified. Certainly a nation cannot be better known than by records, and what it relates of itself.

JOSEPH.

The history of Joseph, considered only as an object of curiosity and literature, is one of the most valuable monuments of antiquity which have reached our times. It appears to have been the model of all the oriental writers. It is more pathetic than Homer's Odyssey, as a forgiving hero is more moving than he that gluts his vengeance.

We account the Arabs to have been the first authors of those ingenious fictions, which have been adopted in all other languages; but, for my part, I meet with no tale among them, comparable to that of Joseph. In almost every part, it is of admirable beauty; and the conclusion draws forth tears of tenderness. It exhibits a youth, in his sixteenth year, of whom his brothers are jealous. He is sold by them to a caravan of Ishmaelite merchants, carried into Egypt, and bought by one of the king's eunuchs. This eunuch had a wife, at which we are not to be startled, for the kislar-aga of Constantinople, who is an arch-eunuch, the whole of his genital parts being abscinded, has a seraglio: his eyes and hands are left, and nature is still nature in him. The other eunuchs, having been deprived only of the two appendages of the generative organ, often make use of it; and Potiphar, to whom Joseph was sold, might very well be of the latter class of eunuchs.

Potiphar's wife becomes enamoured with young Joseph, who, faithful to his master, as a most gracious benefactor, rejects her solicitations. Such behaviour turns her love into rancour, and she charges Joseph with an attempt to seduce her. This is the history of Hippolytus and Phædra, of Bellerophon and Sthenobœa, of Hebrus and Damasippe, of Tanis and Peribœa, of Marsillus and Hippodamia, of Peleus and Demenetta.

Which is the original of all these histories, is not easily known; but the ancient Arabian authors have a passage relating to the transaction between Joseph and Potiphar's wife, which is very ingenious. The author supposes, that Potiphar, hesitating between his wife and Joseph, did not look upon his wife's having torn a piece of Joseph's robe, as any weighty proof of the young man's crime. There was, at that time, in the wife's chamber, a child in the cradle. Joseph said, that she had forcibly taken hold of his robe, and torn it, in the child's presence. Potiphar asked the child, who, it seems, was of a very pregnant wit for his age. The child said to Potiphar, "See whether the robe be torn before or behind; if before, it shows that Joseph was for laying hands on your wife, and that she stood on her defence; if behind, it is plain your wife ran after him." Thus did this child's genius clear up Joseph's innocence. This is the account given in the Alcoran, from an ancient Arabian author, without informing us to whom this witty child belonged. If it was a son of dame Potiphar's, Joseph was not the first with whom this woman had desired an intimacy.

However it be, Joseph, according to the book of Genesis, is

clapped up in prison, and happens to be with the king's cup-bearer and butler. Both these state prisoners had a dream the same night, which Joseph explained to them: he foretold, that within three days the cup-bearer should be restored to favour, and the butler hanged; which fell out accordingly.

Two years after, the king of Egypt had a very perplexing dream, on which his cup-bearer acquaints him, that there is in prison a Jewish young man, who had not his equal for explaining dreams. He is sent for, and predicts the seven years of plenty, and the seven barren years.

Here we must make a small interruption in the thread of the story, to observe the prodigious antiquity of the interpretation of dreams. Jacob had seen in a dream the mysterious ladder, at the top of which was God himself. In a dream, he learned the method of multiplying his flocks, a method which has never succeeded but with him. Joseph himself had been informed by a dream, that he should one day be superior to his brothers. Abimelech, long before, had notice given him in a dream that Sarah was Abraham's wife. [*See the article*, DREAM.] We shall now return to Joseph.

On his having explained Pharaoh's dream, he was immediately created prime minister. It is a question whether, now a-days, any king, even in Asia, would bestow a post of that importance for having explained a dream. Pharaoh made up a match between Joseph and a daughter of Potiphar's. This Potiphar is said to have been high-priest of Heliopolis, so that it could not be the eunuch, his first master; or if it was, he must certainly have had another title than that of high-priest; and his wife had been a mother more than once.

In the mean time the famine came on, according to Joseph's prediction; and his minister, to rivet himself into the royal favour, so managed matters, that all the people were under a necessity of selling their lands to Pharaoh; and the whole nation to procure corn became slaves to the crown. This may probably be the origin of despotism. It must be owned that never king made a better bargain; but, on the other hand, the people owed little gratitude and applause to the prime minister.

At length Joseph's father and brothers likewise came to want corn, for the famine was sore in all the land. As for Joseph's reception of his brethren, his forgiving them, and loading them with kindness, we shall take the liberty to omit those particulars, observing only, that this history has every interesting part of an epic poem; the sublime, the marvellous, the exposition, connexion, discovery, and reverse of

fortune. I know nothing more strongly marked with oriental genius.

The answer of good Jacob, Joseph's hoary father, to Pharaoh, ought deeply to impress every one who can read. "What may your age be?" said the king to him. "A hundred and thirty years," answered the old man; "and in this short pilgrimage, I have not seen one happy day."

LAWS.

In the time of Vespasian and Titus, when the Romans used to rip up and draw the Jews, a very wealthy Israelite, to avoid that disagreeable treatment, moved off with all the fruits of his usury, carrying with him to Eziongaber all his family, which consisted of his aged wife, a son, and a daughter; for retinue he had two eunuchs, one a cook, the other a kind of gardener and vine-dresser: an honest Essene, who knew the Pentateuch by heart, officiated as his chaplain. All these going aboard a vessel at Eziongaber, crossed the Red Sea, as it is called, though it has nothing of that colour, and entered the gulf of Persia, in quest of the country of Ophir, without knowing where it lay. A dreadful storm drove this Hebrew family towards India, where the vessel was stranded on one of the Maldivia islands then desert, but now called Padrabranca.

The old hunk and his joan were drowned: but the son and daughter, with the two eunuchs and chaplain, got safe to land. They made shift to save some of the provisions; and having built huts in the island, began to be something reconciled to their disaster. The island of Padrabranca, you know, is five degrees from the line, and produces the largest cocoa-nuts and the best pine-apples in the whole world. It was not uncomfortable living there, at a time when every where else the favoured people were slaughtered as fast as they could be found: but the good Essene frequently wept at thinking that they might be the only Jews on earth, and that the seed of Abraham might be drawing to an end.

"What signify your tears?" said the young Jew; "it is in your power to prevent its ending: marry my sister."—"I would very willingly," answered the chaplain; "but it is against the law. I am an Essene, and have made a vow against marriage; and by the laws, vows are to be observed. Come of the Jewish race what will, never will I marry your sister, though she were ten times handsomer than she is."—

"My two eunuchs," answered the Jew, "cannot raise seed from her; so with your leave, I will do the business, and you shall marry us."—"Let me be ripped up and drawn over and over," said the chaplain, "rather than have any hand in making you commit incest; were she your sister only by the father's side, I would not hesitate so much about it, as not being directly against law; but she is your sister by the mother's side, so that would be quite abominable."—"I am very well aware that it would be a crime at Jerusalem, where I might have other young women; but on the island of Padrabranca, where I see only cocoa-nuts, ananas, and oysters, I hold it very allowable."

Thus the Jew married his sister, and, notwithstanding all the Essene's protestations, had by her a daughter, who was the sole fruit of a marriage by one held legal, and by the other abominable.

Fourteen years after, the mother departed this life: "Well," said the father to the chaplain, "have you got over your former prejudices? will you marry my daughter?"—"God forbid!" said the Essene. "If you will not, I will," said the father; "the seed of Abraham shall not come to an end, if I can help it." The Essene, quite frightened at such horrible words, would not live any longer with one who made so light of the law, and fled. The bridegroom called after him, "Stop, honest Ananeel; I observe the law of nature: I am preserving the chosen race: do not leave your friends;" but the Essene, full of the Mosaic law, without so much as looking back, swam over to the nearest island.

This was Attola, a large island, both populous and thoroughly civilized. On his landing, he was made a slave. When he had got a little of the Attola tongue, he complained very bitterly of his being used so inhospitably; but he was given to understand that such was their law; and that, since the island had narrowly escaped being surprized by the inhabitants of Shot Ada, it had been wisely provided, that all strangers coming to Attola should be made slaves. "A law it cannot be," said the Essene; "for no such thing is in the Pentateuch." To which he had for answer, that it was in the country code; and a slave he remained, but with the good fortune of having an excellent master, who was very rich, and ruled him in a manner which much endeared him to the Essene.

Some ruffians came one day to rob and kill the master. They asked the slaves whether he was at home, and had a great deal of money by him. "By all the gods," said the slaves, "he has little or no money at all; neither is he at

home." But the Essene said, "The law does not allow of lying; and I swear to you that he is at home and has a great deal of money." So the master was robbed and murdered. On this the slaves had the Essene before the judges, for betraying his master. The Essene owned his words, saying, that he would not tell a lie on any account; and he was hanged.

This story, and many such, were told me in my last journey from the Indies to France. On my arrival, some business calling me to Versailles, I saw a very fine woman, followed by several other fine women. "Who is that young woman?" said I to my lawyer, who was come with me; for, having a process in the parliament of Paris, on account of clothes made for me in the Indies, I had my counsellor always with me. "It is the king's daughter," said he; "and, besides her beauty, she is of a most excellent temper: it is a pity that she can never be queen of France."—"How!" said I; "if, which God forbid! all her royal relations and the princes of the blood were to die, could not she inherit her father's kingdom?"—"No," said the counsellor; "the Salic law is expressly against it."—"And who made that Salic law?" said I. "That I know nothing of," answered he; "but the tradition is, that an ancient people, called the Salians, who could neither read nor write, had a law by which, in the Salic country, no female was to inherit an hereditary fief; and this law has been admitted in a country which is not Salic."—"Has it so," said I; "then I annul it. You assure me that, besides this princess's beauty, she is of an excellent temper; she has, therefore, an indisputable right to the crown, if unfortunately she should survive all the rest of the royal family. My mother was heiress to her father, and this princess shall be heiress to her's."

The next day my cause came on in one of the courts of parliament, and they all gave it against me. My counsellor told me that in another court I should have gained it unanimously. "Very odd, indeed," said I: "then so many courts, so many laws."—"Yes," said he, "there are not less than twenty-five commentaries on the common law at Paris; that is, the Paris common law has been twenty-five times proved to be ambiguous; and were there twenty-five courts, there would be as many different bodies of laws. We have," continued he, "a province called Normandy, about fifteen leagues from Paris; and there your cause would have been decided quite otherwise than it is here." This made me desirous of seeing Normandy, and I went thither with one of

my brothers. At the first inn we came to was a young man, storming most furiously. I asked him, what was the matter? "Matter enough," answered he; "I have an elder brother." —"Where is the mighty misfortune of having a brother?" said I to him: "my brother is my elder, and yet we live very easily together."—"But here, Sir," said he, "the damned law gives every thing to the elder, and the younger may shift for himself."—"If that be the case," said I, "well may you be angry: with us things are equally divided, yet sometimes brothers do not love one another the better for it."

These little adventures led me to some very profound reflections on the laws, and I found them to be like our garments: at Constantinople it is proper to wear a doliman, and at Paris a coat. If all human laws are by compact, the only point is to make good bargains. The citizens of Delhi and Agra say that they made a very bad agreement with Tamerlane: the citizens of London, again, value themselves for the good bargain they made with William III. One of that opulent body was saying to me, It is necessity which makes laws, and force causes them to be observed. I asked him whether force did not likewise make laws; and whether William the Conqueror had not prescribed to England laws, without any previous convention? "Yes," said he; "we were then oxen, and William put a yoke upon us, and goaded us along. Since those times we are become men, but with our horns still remaining; we are sure to gore any one that will make us plough for him and not for ourselves."

Full of these reflections, I was pleased to find, that there is a natural law independent of all human conventions; that the fruit of my labour should be my property; that it is my duty to honour my parents; that I have no right to my neighbour's life, nor my neighbour to mine, &c. but when it came into my mind that, from Cordolaomer down to Mentzel, colonel of hussars, it has been customary to show one's loyalty, by effusion of human blood, and to pillage one's neighbour by patent, I was touched to the heart.

I am told that robbers have their laws, and that war has also its laws. On my asking, what are those laws of war, I am answered, It is to hang up a brave officer for maintaining against a royal army a bad post, without cannon: it is to hang up a prisoner if one of your men has been hanged; it is to burn and destroy those villages which have not brought in their whole subsistence, at the day appointed by the gracious sovereign of the neighbourhood.—So this, says I, is the spirit of laws!

By further information, I heard of some very wise laws, condemning a shepherd to the galleys for nine years, for giving a little foreign salt to sheep. A neighbour of mine has been ruined by an indictment for cutting down two oaks in his own wood, not observing a formality which he had not been able to know any thing of. His wife died of grief, in extreme distress, and his son lives, if it may be so called, very wretchedly. I own that these laws are just, though the execution of them is a little hard; but I cannot bear with those laws which authorise a hundred thousand men to go, under the pretence of loyalty, and massacre as many peaceable neighbours. The generality of mankind appear to be naturally endued with sense enough to make laws; but then it is not every one who has virtue sufficient to enact good laws.

Call together from all the parts of the earth, the husbandmen, (a simple, quiet class,) they will at once agree that the surplus of one's corn should be allowed to be sold to our neighbours, and that a law to the contrary is both absurd and inhuman; that coin, as representing provisions, should be no more adulterated than the products of the earth; that a father of a family should be master within his own walls; that religion should promote friendship and benevolence among men living in society, and not make them fanatics and persecutors; that the labouring and busy class should not be deprived of the fruits of their industry, to bestow them on superstition and sloth. This plain assembly would in an hour make thirty such laws, all beneficial to mankind.

But should Tamerlane come and subdue India, you will see nothing but arbitrary laws. One shall squeeze a province to enrich a publican of Tamerlane's; another shall make it high-treason, only for having dropped a free word concerning the mistress of the rajah's first valet de chambre; a third shall take away from the farmer half his harvest, and dispute the remainder with him; and what is worse than all this, there will be laws by which a Tartar messenger shall come, and take away your children in the cradle, making them soldiers, or eunuchs, according to their constitutions, and leave the father and mother to wipe away each other's tears.

Query, is it better to be Tamerlane's dog or his subject? doubtless his dog has much the best of it.

CIVIL AND ECCLESIASTICAL LAWS.

THE following minutes were found among the papers of an eminent lawyer, and perhaps deserve some consideration:

No ecclesiastical law should ever be in force till it has formally received the express sanction of the government: by this it was, that Athens and Rome never had any religious quarrels.

Those quarrels appertain only to barbarous nations.

To permit or prohibit working on holydays, should only be in the magistrate's power: it is not the fit concern of priests to hinder men from cultivating their grounds.

Every thing relating to marriages should depend solely on the magistrate; and let the priests be limited to the august function of the solemnization.

Lending at interest, to be entirely within the cognizance of the civil law, as by it commercial affairs are regulated.

All ecclesiastics whatever should, as the state's subjects, in all cases be under the controul and animadversion of the government.

Away with that disgraceful absurdity, of paying to a foreign priest the first year's produce of an estate given to a priest of our own country.

No priest should have it in his power to deprive a member of society of the least privilege, on pretence of his sins; for a priest being himself a sinner, is to pray for sinners: he has no business to try and condemn them.

Magistrates, farmers, and priests, are alike to contribute to the expences of the state, as alike belonging to the state.

One weight, one measure, one custom.

The punishments of criminals should be of use: when a man is hanged he is good for nothing; whereas a man condemned to the public works, still benefits his country, and is a living admonition.

Every law should be clear, uniform, and precise; explanations are, for the most part, corruptions.

The only infamy should be vice.

Taxes to be proportionate.

A law should never clash with custom; for if the custom be good, the law must be faulty.

LIBERTY;

OR,

A Dialogue between a PHILOSOPHER *and his* FRIEND.

Phil. A BATTERY of cannon is playing close by your ears; are you at liberty to hear, or not to hear it?

Friend. Unquestionably I cannot but hear it.

Phil. Would you have those cannon carry off your head, and your wife's and daughter's, who are walking with you?

Friend. What a question is that! In my sober senses, it is impossible that I should will any such thing: it cannot be.

Phil. Well; you necessarily hear the explosion of those cannon, and you necessarily are against being, with your family, cut off by a cannon-shot as you are taking the air; you have not the power not to hear, nor the power of willing to remain there.

Friend. Nothing more evident.

Phil. Accordingly, you have come thirty paces to be out of the cannons' way: thus you have had the power of walking that little space with me.

Friend. That again is clear.

Phil. And if you had been paralytic, you could not have avoided being exposed to this battery: you would not have had the power of being where you are; you would, necessarily, not only have heard the explosion, but have received a cannon-shot; and thus you would necessarily have been killed.

Friend. Very true.

Phil. In what then consists your liberty? if not in the power which your body has made use of to do, what your volition, by an absolute necessity, required.

Friend. You put me to a stand. Liberty then is nothing but the power of doing what I will?

Phil. Think of it, and see whether liberty can have any other meaning.

Friend. At this rate, my greyhound is as free as I am: he has necessarily a will to run at the sight of a hare, and likewise the power of running, if not lame: so that in nothing am I superior to my dog. This is levelling me with the beasts.

Phil. Such are the wretched sophisms of those who have tutored you. Wretched thing indeed, to be in the same state of liberty as your dog! And are not you like your dog in a

thousand things? In hunger, thirst, waking, sleeping: and your five senses, are they not common to him? Are you for smelling otherwise than through the nose? Why then are you for having liberty in a manner different from him?

Friend. But I have a soul continually reasoning, which my dog knows little of. Simple ideas are very near all his portion; whereas I have a thousand metaphysical ideas.

Phil. Well: you are a thousand times more free than he; that is, you have a thousand times more power of thinking than he: still you are not free in a manner different from him.

Friend. How! am I not at liberty to will what I will?

Phil. Your meaning?

Friend. I mean what all the world means: is it not a common saying, Will is free?

Phil. A proverb is no reason: please to explain yourself more clearly.

Friend. I mean, that I have the liberty of willing as I please.

Phil. By your leave, there is no sense in that. Do you not perceive that it is ridiculous to say, I will will; you will necessarily, in consequence of the ideas occurring to you. Would you marry, yes or no?

Friend. What, were I to say, I neither will the one nor the other?

Phil. That would be answering like him who said, some think cardinal Mazarine dead, others believe him to be still living, but I believe neither the one nor the other!

Friend. Well, I have a mind to marry.

Phil. Good: that is something of an answer. And why have you a mind to marry?

Friend. Because I am in love with a young lady, who is handsome, of a sweet temper, well bred, with a tolerable fortune, sings charmingly, and her parents are perhaps of good credit. Besides, I flatter myself that my addresses are very acceptable, both to herself and to her family.

Phil. Why, there is a reason. You see you cannot will without a reason, and I declare you have the liberty of marrying; that is, you have the power of signing the contract.

Friend. How! not will without a reason! What then becomes of another proverb, "*sit pro ratione voluntas?*"—my will is my reason. I will because I will.

Phil. My dear friend, under favour, that is an absurdity; there would then be in you an effect without a cause.

Friend. What! when I am playing at even and odd, is there a reason for my choosing even, rather than odd?

Phil. Yes, to be sure.

Friend. Pray let me hear that reason.

Phil. Because the idea of odd presented itself to your mind before the contrary notion. It would be strange, indeed, that in some cases you will because there is a cause of volition; and that in other cases you will without any cause. In your willing to be married, you evidently perceive the determining reason; and in playing at even and odd, you do not perceive it; and yet one there must be.

Friend. But again, am I not then free?

Phil. Your will is not free, but your actions are: you are free to act, when you have the power of acting.

Friend. But all the books I have read on the liberty of indifference——

Phil. Are nonsense. There is no such thing as liberty of indifference: it is a word void of sense, and coined by those who were not overloaded with it.

LIMITS OF THE HUMAN UNDERSTANDING.

Poor doctor! these limits are every where. Art thou for knowing how it came to pass, that thy arm and thy leg obey thy will, and thy liver does not? Wouldst thou investigate how thought is formed in thy minute understanding, and the child in that woman's womb? I give thee what time thou wilt. Tell me also, what is matter? Thy equals have written ten thousand volumes on this article: some qualities of this substance they have found, and children know them as well as thyself; but what is that substance essentially? and what is that to which thou hast given the appellation of spirit, from a Latin word signifying breath, in the room of a better, because thou hast no idea of it?

See this grain of corn, which I throw into the ground, and tell me how it rises again to shoot forth a stem with an ear? Inform me how the same ground produces an apple on this tree, and a chesnut on that? I could fill a folio with such questions, to which thy answer ought to be, I know not. And yet thou hast taken thy degrees, and wearest a furred gown and cap, and art called master: and there is another fool, who, priding himself upon a petty employment in some paltry town, conceits that he has likewise purchased the privilege of judging and condemning what he does not understand.

Montaigne's motto was, "What do I know?"—*Que sai-je?* and thine is, "What do I not know?"—*Que ne sai-je pas?*

LOVE.

" Love the same in all."

HERE we must call in the constitution: the ground is natural, and embroidered by imagination. Shall I give you an idea of love? view the sparrows in thy garden; view thy pigeons; behold the bull led to thy heifer; look on that spirited horse, which two of thy servants are bringing to thy mare, who quietly, though anxiously, awaits his coming: how his eyes glare, how he neighs: observe how he prances; his erect ears, his convulsed mouth, his snorting, his turgid nostrils, his fiery breath issuing from them; the flutterings of his mane; the impetuosity with which he rushes on the object that nature has appointed for him: but forbear all discontent, and consider the advantages of the human species. In matters of love, they make up for those which nature has given to beasts,—strength, beauty, activity, and velocity.

There are even creatures strangers to fruition. It is a delight of which shell-fish are deprived; the female ejects millions of eggs on the slime and mud; the male, in passing by, fecundates them by his sperm, without troubling himself what female they belong to.

Most creatures, in copulation, receive pleasure only from one sense, and, that appetite satisfied, sink into insensibility. Thou alone, of all animals, art acquainted with the warm endearments of embraces; thy whole body glows with ecstatic sensations; thy lips, especially enjoy a most sweet delight, without satiety or weariness, and this delight is peculiar to thy species: lastly, thou canst, at all times, give thyself to love; whereas other creatures have only a stated season. Reflect on these pre-eminences, and thou wilt say with the earl of Rochester, " Love would cause the deity to be worshipped, in a land of atheists."

As it has been imparted to mankind, to improve the several gifts of nature, they have made improvements in love. Cleanliness, or the care of one's person, rendering the skin softer, increases the pleasure of touch; and, attention to health, adds a more exquisite sensibility to the organs of voluptuousness.

All other sentiments combine with that of love, as metals amalgamate with gold: friendship and esteem join to support it; and the talents, both of the body and the mind, are additional ties.

Self-love, especially, adds force to the several ties. We

are enraptured with our choice, and a crowd of illusions decorate that work, of which the foundation is laid in nature.

Such is thy pre-eminence above other animals; but, if thou enjoyest so many pleasures, withheld from them, how many vexations are thy portion, of which beasts have no idea! One dreadful circumstance to thee is, that in three-fourths of the earth, nature has infected the delights of love, and the source of life, with a horrible distemper, to which man alone is subject, and, in him, affecting only the organs of generation.

This contagion is not, like many other distempers, the consequence of excesses; neither was it debauchery which produced it. Phryne, Lais, Flora, and Messalina, knew nothing of it. It received its birth in islands, where mankind lived in innocence; and from thence it has spread into the whole world.

If ever nature could be arraigned of neglecting its work, of thwarting its own plan, and counteracting its own views, it is here. Is this the best of the possible worlds? What! has Cæsar, Antony, or Octavius, never had this distemper? and was it not possible that it should have proved the death of Francis I.? No, it is said, things were so ordered for the best: I will believe so, but that is very melancholy for those to whom Rabelais dedicated his book.

SOCRATIC LOVE, AS IT IS CALLED.

How could it be, that a vice, which, if general, would extinguish the human species; an infamous crime against nature, should become so natural? It appears to be the last degree of reflective corruption; and yet it is usually found in those who have not had time to be corrupted. It makes its way into novice hearts, who are strangers to ambition, fraud, and a thirst after wealth; it is blind youth, which, at the end of childhood, by an unaccountable instinct, plunges itself into this enormity.

The inclination of the two sexes for each other, declares itself very early; but, after all that has been said of the African women, and those of the southern parts of Asia, this propensity is much stronger in man than in woman. Agreeably to the universal law of nature, in all creatures, it is ever the male who makes the first advances. The young males of our species, brought up together, coming to feel that play which nature begins to unfold to them, in the want of the natural ob-

ject of their instinct, betake themselves to a resemblance of such objects.

It is nothing uncommon for a boy, by the beauty of his complexion, and the mild sparkle of his eyes, for two or three years, to have the look of a pretty girl. Now, the love of such a boy, arises from a mistake in nature: the female sex is honoured in our fondness for what partakes of her beauties, and when such resemblance is withered by age, the mistake is at an end.

This mistake in nature is known to be much more common in mild climates, than amidst the northern frosts, the blood being there more fervid, and the occasion more frequent: accordingly, what seems only weakness in young Alcibiades, is, in a Dutch sailor, or a Russian sutler, a most loathsome abomination.

I cannot bear, that the Greeks should be charged with having authorised this licentiousness. The legislator, Solon, is brought in because he has said,

> "A beauteous boy thou mayst embrace,
> While no rough beard deforms his face."

But who will say that Solon was a legislator at the time of his making these two ridiculous lines? He was then young, and, when the rake was grown virtuous, it cannot be thought that he inserted such an infamy among the laws of his republic: it is like accusing Theodore de Beza, of having preached up pederasty in his church, because in his youth, he had made verses on young Candidus, and says,

> "*Amplector hunc et illam.*"

Plutarch likewise, is misunderstood; who, among his rants in the dialogue on love, makes one of the speakers say, that women are not worthy of a genuine love; but another speaker keenly takes the women's part.

It is as certain, as the knowledge of antiquity can be, that Socratic love was not an infamous passion. It is the word *love* has occasioned the mistake. The lovers of a youth were exactly what, among us, are the minions of our princes, or formerly pages of honour; young gentlemen, who had partaken of the education of children of rank, and who accompanied their patrons in their studies, or in the field. This was a martial and holy institution, but it was soon abused, as were the nocturnal feasts and orgies.

The troop of lovers, instituted by Laius, was an invincible corps of young warriors, engaged by oath, mutually to lay down their lives for one another; and, perhaps, never had ancient discipline any thing more grand or useful.

Sextus Empiricus, and others, may talk as long as they please of pederasty being recommended by the laws of Persia. Let them quote the text of the law, and even show the Persian code, yet will I not believe it. I will say, it is not true, by reason of its being impossible. I do aver, that it is not in human nature to make a law contradictory and injurious to nature: a law, which, literally adhered to, would put an end to the human species. The thing is, scandalous customs, being connived at, are often mistaken for the laws of a country. Sextus Empiricus, doubting of every thing, might as well doubt of this jurisprudence. If, living in our days, he had seen two or three young Jesuits fondling some scholars, could he, from thence say, that this sport was permitted them by the constitutions of Ignatius Loyola?

The love of boys was so common at Rome, that no punishment was thought of for a crime into which every body ran headlong. Octavius Augustus, that sensualist, that cowardly murderer, dared to banish Ovid, at the same time that he was very well pleased with Virgil's singing the beauty and flights of Alexis, and Horace's making little odes for Ligurinus. Still the old Scantinian law, against pederasty, was in force: the emperor Philip revived it, and caused the boys, who followed that trade, to be driven out of Rome. In a word, I cannot think that ever there was a polished nation, where the laws were contrary to morality.

SELF-LOVE.

A BEGGAR, about the skirts of Madrid, used to ask alms with great dignity: a person passing by said to him, "Are you not ashamed to follow this scandalous trade, you who are able to work?"—"Sir," answered the beggar, "I ask you for money, and not for advice;" then turned his back upon him with all the stateliness of a Castilian. Don was a lofty beggar indeed; his vanity soon took pet. He could ask alms out of self-love; and, from another kind of self-love, would not bear reproof.

A missionary, in India, met a facquier loaded with chains, as bare as an ape, lying on his belly, while his countrymen, at his request, were whipping him for his sins, and, at the same

time, dropping him some farthings. "What self-denial is this; what abasement," said one of the spectators. "Self-denial! abasement!" answered the facquier; "I would have you to know, that I consent to be flogged in this world, only that I may give it you home in the other, when you shall be horses, and I the rider."

Thus, they who have affirmed self-love to be the basis of all our sentiments, and all our actions, are much in the right, in India, Spain, and all the habitable parts of the earth; and, as there is no occasion to demonstrate, that men have a face, as little need is there of proving to them, that they are actuated by self-love. This self-love is the means of our preservation; and, like the instrument of the perpetuation of the species, is necessary, is dear to us; it gives us pleasure, but still is to be concealed.

LUXURY.

For these two thousand years past, luxury has been declaimed against, both in verse and prose: but still mankind have always delighted in it.

What encomiums have been bestowed on the primitive Romans, yet those banditti ravaged their neighbours' fields! and, to increase their poor village, they destroyed the poor villages of the Volsci and the Samnites. They were, to be sure, men of a most glorious disinterestedness, and elevated virtue! Gold, silver, and jewels, they never had stolen, because there were no such things in the towns which they pillaged! Their woods and fens afforded no partridges nor pheasants, and their temperance is cried up!

When, having gradually plundered people after people, from the Adriatic to the Euphrates, they had sense enough to sit down in the quiet enjoyment of their rapine, for seven or eight hundred years; when they cultivated every art, and lived in every pleasure, and even introduced them among those whom they had conquered; then they are said to have lost both their prudence and their virtue!

The substance of all these declamations is to prove, that a robber ought never to eat the dinner he has taken away, nor wear the clothes or rings which he has stolen. Those things, say the declaimers, to keep themselves honest, they should have thrown into the river. Rather say, gentlemen, that they ought not to have robbed; execrate robbers as much as you please, but do not call them madmen, for quietly enjoying what

they have got. Are those English to be blamed, who, after filling their purses at the taking of Pondicherry and the Havanna, made them somewhat lighter, amidst the diversions of London, in amends for the hardships they had undergone in Asia and America?

Would those declaimers have a man bury the riches which he may have acquired, by war or agriculture, by trade or ingenuity? They quote Lacedemon, and why do they not also quote the republic of St. Marino? What good did Sparta ever do to Greece? Did it ever produce a Demosthenes, a Sophocles, an Apelles or a Phidias? whereas the luxury of Athens gave rise to great men of every kind. Sparta had some good commanders, and yet not so many as the other cities. But we will allow so petty a republic as Lacedemon to retain its poverty. Whether we live in scarcity, or in the affluent fruition of whatever makes life pleasant, we shall one day come to our journey's end. The Canadian lives, and lives to an old age, as well as the Englishman who has fifty thousand pounds a year: but who will compare the country of the Iroquois to England?

That the republic of Ragusa, and the canton of Zug, make sumptuary laws, is right: the poor man is not to spend beyond his ability; and I have read somewhere, that

> "Luxury still richer makes the ample state,
> While the less prosperous sinks beneath its weight."

If, by luxury, you mean excess, excess in every thing is certainly pernicious: in abstinence as in gluttony, in parsimony as in liberality. I do not know how it comes to pass, that, in my villages, where the soil is very indifferent, the taxes heavy, the prohibition against the exportation of grain intolerably rigid; yet is there scarcely a farmer, who is not well clothed and fed. But should this farmer follow his rural occupations in his best clothes, clean linen, and his hair curled and powdered; a greater piece of luxury there could not be, besides the ridiculousness of it; but, for a citizen of Paris or London, to go to the play, apparelled like this farmer, would be a most indecent piece of stinginess:

> "Some certain mean in all things may be found,
> To mark our virtues, and our vices bound."

On the invention of scissars, which certainly does not belong to the most remote antiquity, doubtless severe were the declamations against the first who pared their nails, and crop-

ped off part of their hair, which hung down to their noses. To be sure they were called fops and spendthrifts, laying out their money for an instrument of vanity, to mar the Creator's work. What an enormity, to cut off the horn which God has caused to grow at our fingers' ends! It is an insult to the deity! But much worse was it, on the first appearance of shirts and socks: it is still well known, with what heat the old counsellors, who had never worn any, exclaimed against the younger ones, who came into this most destructive piece of luxury.

MADNESS.

I AM not going about to revive Erasmus's Treatise, which, in our times, would be but a common-place book, and that none of the most entertaining.

By madness is meant that distemper of the organs of the brain, which necessarily hinders a man from thinking and acting like others; if unable to manage his substance, a commission is issued out against him; if incapable of ideas suitable to society, he is excluded; if he be dangerous, he is shut up; and if frantic, he is bound.

An important observation here is, that this man is not without ideas: he has them, whilst waking, like all other men, and often in his sleep. It may be asked, how his soul, being spiritual and immortal, and residing in his brain, to which all the ideas are conveyed by the senses, very plainly and distinctly, yet never forms a right judgment of them. It sees objects equally as the souls of Aristotle, Plato, Locke, and Newton: it hears the same sounds, it has the same sense of the touch; how happens it, then, that with the same perceptions as the wisest of men, it makes a wild, incoherent jumble, without being able to help itself? If this simple and eternal substance has the same instruments for acting, as the souls of the wisest brains, it should reason like them; what can hinder it? If this madman sees red, and the sensible man, blue; if, when this hears music, the madman hears the braying of an ass; if, when they are at church, the madman thinks himself at the play; if, when they hear yes, he hears no, I must, of necessity, conclude, that this soul must think differently from the others. But this madman has the like perceptions that they have; and there is no apparent reason, why his soul, having, through the senses, received all its tools, cannot make use of them. It is said to be pure, to be, of itself, subject to no infirmity; to be provided with all necessary helps; and, what-

ever happens to the body, its essence remains unalterable; yet it is carried, in its case, to Bedlam.

This reflection may give rise to an apprehension, that the faculty of thinking, with which man is endued, is liable to be disordered like the other senses. A madman is a patient, whose brain suffers, as a gouty man is a patient, whose feet and hands suffer. He thought, by means of the brain, as he walked with his feet, without knowing any thing of his incomprehensible power to walk, nor of his no less incomprehensible power to think. The brain may have the gout, as well as the feet: after all, let us argue ever so long, it is faith alone, perhaps, which can convince us, that a simple and immaterial substance can be sick.

Some doctors will say to the madman, Friend, though thou hast no longer common-sense, thy soul is no less pure, spiritual, and immortal, than ours; but our souls are in good quarters, and thine is otherwise. The windows of its apartment are stopped up; and it is stifled for want of air. The madman, in his calm intervals, would give them this answer: This is always your way; your are begging the question; my windows are as much open as yours; I see the same objects, and hear the same words: so that my soul must necessarily either make a bad use of its senses, or be itself a vitiated sense, of a depraved quality. In a word, either my soul is naturally mad, or I have no soul.

One of the doctors will answer, Brother, God may perhaps have created mad as well as wise souls. The madman will reply, To believe what you say, I must be more mad than I am. You who are so very knowing, tell me, wherefore is it that I am mad?

If the doctors have any sense remaining, their answer will be, We know not. Why a brain has incoherent ideas, is above their comprehension; and they as little comprehend why, in another brain, the ideas are regular and connected. They fancy themselves wise, but they are no less mad than he.

MATTER.

Wise men, on being asked what the soul is, answer, that they are entirely ignorant of it; and, if asked what matter is, they give the like answer. Professors, indeed, and especially schoolmen, are perfectly versed in those things; and, when they say, as they have been taught, that matter is extended and divisible, they fancy that is all; but, when desired to tell

what this extended thing is, they are hard put to it. It is composed of parts, say they. Of what are these parts composed? Are the elements of them divisible? Then they are struck dumb, or talk without end, which is equally suspicious. Is this almost-unknown being, called matter, eternal? So all antiquity believed. Has it, of itself, an active force? This is the opinion of several philosophers. Have they who deny it any superior reason for their opinions? You do not conceive that matter can, intrinsically, have any property: but how can you affirm that it has not, intrinsically, such properties as are necessary to it? You know nothing of its nature, and yet deny it to have modes, which reside in its nature; for, after all, as matter exists, it must have a form and figure; and being necessarily figured, is it impossible that there are other modes annexed to its configuration? Matter exists, you know; but you know it no further than by your sensations. Alas! what avail all subtilties and sophisms since reasoning has been in vogue? Geometry has taught us many truths, and metaphysics very few. We weigh, we measure, we analyse, we decompound matter; but on offering to go a step beyond these rude operations, we find ourselves bewildered, and an abyss opens before us.

Forgive, I entreat you, the mistake of the whole universe, in believing matter to be self-existent. How could they do otherwise? how could they conceive, that what is without succession, has not always been? Were the existence of matter not necessary, why exists it? and, if it were to exist, why should it not always have existed? Never was axiom more universally received than this: nothing produces nothing. The contrary, indeed, is incomprehensible: all nations have held their chaos anterior to the divine disposition of the world. The eternity of matter never was known to do any hurt to the worship of the Deity. Religion never took offence at an eternal God's being owned as the master of an eternal matter: but it is the happiness of our times to know, by faith, that God drew matter from nothing, an article which no nation had been informed of: the very Jews knew nothing of it. The first verse of the book of Genesis says, that the gods, Eloim, and not Eloi, made both heaven and earth: but it does not say that heaven and earth were created out of nothing.

Philo, who came at the only time that the Jews had any erudition, says, in his chapter of the creation, "God, being naturally good, did not envy substance or matter, which of itself had nothing good, which naturally is nothing but inert-

ness, confusion, and disorder; but from bad, as it was, he condescended to make it good."

The opinion of the chaos being arranged by a deity, is to be met with in all the ancient theogonies. Hesiod, in saying, "The chaos was first in existence," delivered the thoughts of the whole east; and Ovid declared the sentiments of the Roman empire in the following verse:

> "Thus when the God, whatever god was he,
> Had form'd the whole, ———"

Matter, therefore, was looked on, in the hands of God, as clay under the potter's wheel, if such faint images may be used to express the divine power. Matter, being eternal, should have eternal properties,—as configuration, the inert power, motion, and divisibility. But this divisibility is no more than the consequence of motion, as without motion there can be no division, separation, nor arrangement; therefore motion was looked on as essential to matter. The chaos had been a confused motion; and the arrangement of the universe was a regular motion, impressed on all bodies by the Sovereign of the world. But how should matter, of itself, have motion, as according to all the ancients, it has extension and impenetrability?

It cannot, however, be conceived without extension, and it may without motion. To this the answer was, It is impossible but matter must be permeable; and if permeable, something must be continually passing into its pores; for where is the use of passages, if nothing passes through them?

There would be no end of replying. The system of the eternity of matter, has, like all other systems, very great difficulties. That of matter formed out of nothing is not less incomprehensible. It must be admitted, without flattering ourselves to account for it. Philosophy does not account for every thing. How many incomprehensible things are admitted even in geometry itself! Can you conceive two lines, ever approaching to each other, and never meeting?

Geometricians, indeed, will tell us that the properties of the asymptotes are demonstrated to you, so that you cannot but admit them: the creation is not; wherefore then do you admit it? What difficulty do you find to believe, with all antiquity, the eternity of matter? On the other hand, the divine pushes you, and says, that in believing the eternity of matter you make two principles, God and matter, and fall into the error of Zoroaster and Manes.

The geometricians shall go without an answer, for they pay no regard to any thing but their lines, their surfaces, and their *solids*; but to the divine it may be said, How am I a Manichee? There is a heap of stones which no architect has made, but with them he has built a vast edifice. Here I do not admit of two architects; only the rough stones have submitted to the operations of power and genius.

Happily, which ever system be espoused, morality is hurt by neither; for what signifies it, whether matter be made, or only arranged? God is equally our absolute master. Whether the chaos was only put in order, or whether it was created of nothing, still it behoves us to be virtuous. Scarcely any of these metaphysical questions have a relation to the conduct of life: disputes are like table-talk, every one forgets, after dinner, what he has said, and goes away where his interest or inclination lead him.

MESSIAH,

Or Meshia, in Hebrew; Christos, or Celomenos, in Greek; or Unctus in Latin, signify *anointed*.

We see, in the Old Testament, that the name of Messiah was often given to idolatrous, or infidel princes. God is said to have sent a prophet to anoint Jehu, king of Israel; he signified the sacred unction to Hazael, king of Damascus and Syria, those two princes being the Messiahs of the Most High, to punish the house of Ahab.

In the forty-fifth chapter of Isaiah, the name of Messiah is expressly given to Cyrus. "Thus hath the Lord said to his anointed (his Messiah), whose right hand I have holden to subdue nations before him."

Ezekiel, in the twenty-eighth chapter of his revelations, gives the appellation of Messiah to the king of Tyrus, whom he also calls Cherubim. Son of man, says the Eternal to the prophet, lift up thy voice and utter a lamentation concerning the king of Tyrus; and say unto him, thus saith the Lord, the Eternal, thou wast the seal of the likeness of God, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty; thou wast the Lord's garden of Eden; or, according to other versions, thou wast the Lord's whole delight. Thy garments were of Sardonix, topaz, jasper, chrysolite, onyx, beryl, sapphire, carbuncle, emerald, and gold. What thy tabrets and thy flutes could do,

was within thee; they were all ready on the day thou wast created; thou hast a Cherubim, a Messiah.

The title of Messiah, or Christ, was given to the kings, prophets, and high-priests, among the Hebrews. The Lord and his Messiah are witness, 1 Kings, xii. 3; that is, the Lord and the king whom he hath set up; and, elsewhere, touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm. David, who was divinely inspired, in more than one place gives the title of Messiah to Saul, his rejected father-in-law, who persecuted him. God forbid, says he frequently, that I should lay my hand on the Lord's anointed, the Messiah of God!

As the name of Messiah, or anointed of the Eternal, has been given to idolatrous kings and reprobate persons, very often has it been used to indicate the true anointed of the Lord, the Messiah, by way of excellence, the Christ, the Son of God; lastly, God himself.

If all the oracles usually applied to the Messiah were to be compared, it may give rise to some seeming difficulties, and which the Jews have made use of to justify their hardness of belief and obstinacy, did it admit of an apology. Several eminent divines allow that the Jews, groaning under an oppressive slavery, and having so many repeated promises from the Eternal, might well long for the coming of a Messiah, who was to deliver them and subdue their enemies; and that they are in some measure excusable for having not immediately perceived Jesus to be his deliverer and conqueror.

It was agreeable to the plan of Eternal Wisdom, that the spiritual ideas of the real Messiah should be unknown to the blind multitude; and so far were they unknown, that the Jewish doctors have denied, that those passages which we produce are to be understood of the Messiah. Many affirm that the Messiah is already come in the person of Hezekiah; and this was the famous Hillel's opinion. Others, and these are many, say that the belief of the coming of a Messiah, so far from being a fundamental article of faith, was only a comfortable hope, no such thing being mentioned in the Decalogue, or in Leviticus.

Several Rabbins tell you, that they do not in the least question the Messiah's being come at the time decreed; that he is not however growing old, but remains in the world concealed, and waits till Israel shall have duly celebrated the Sabbath, to reveal himself.

The famous Rabbi, Solomon Jarchy, or Raschy, who flourished during the beginning of the twelfth century, says, in his

Talmudics, that the ancient Hebrews believed the Messiah to have been born on the very day of the final destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. This answers to the common saying, of sending for the doctor when a man is dead.

The Rabbi Kimchi, who also lived in the twelfth century, preached that the Messiah, whose coming he imagined to be near, would drive the Christians out of Judea, which was then in their possession. The Christians, indeed, were dispossessed of the Holy Land; but this was done by Saladin; and had that conqueror taken the Jews under his protection, it is very probable that, in their enthusiasm, they would have made him their Messiah.

The sacred authors, and our Lord Jesus himself, often compare the Messiah's reign, and the eternal beatitude, to a wedding and banquet; but these parables have been strangely wrested by the Talmudists. According to them, the Messiah will gather together all his people in the land of Canaan, and give them an entertainment, where the wine will be that which Adam himself made in the earthly Paradise, and which he keeps in vast cellars, dug by angels in the centre of the earth.

The first course will be the famous fish called the great leviathan, which at once swallows a fish less than itself, yet it is three hundred leagues in length; and the whole mass of waters is supported on this leviathan. God at first created a male and a female; but, lest they might overturn the earth, or crowd the universe with their offspring, he killed the female, and salted it down for the Messiah's banquet.

The Rabbins add, that there will likewise be killed, the bull called behemoth, of such a monstrous size, that every day it eats the herbage of a thousand mountains. This bull's female was slain at the beginning of the world, to prevent the multiplication of such prodigious species, which must have been extremely detrimental to other creatures: but they say that the Eternal did not salt it, cow's flesh not being so good salted as that of the female leviathan. So firmly do the Jews believe all these rabbinical chimeras, that it is common among them to swear by their share of the behemoth.

With such coarse ideas concerning the coming of the Messiah and his reign, is it to be wondered at that the Jews, both ancient and modern, and several even of the first Christians, unhappily prepossessed with all these reveries, could not raise their conceptions to the idea of the divine nature of the Lord's anointed, or perceive God in the Messiah? "To acknowledge a man-god," say they, "is imposing on one's self; it is forming a monster, a centaur, the strange compound of two

natures, incompatible with each other." Adding that the prophets never taught the Messiah's being Man-god; that they expressly distinguish between God and David; that they plainly declare the former to be master, and the latter servant, &c.

It is sufficiently known that the Jews servilely adhered to the letter of the scriptures, never, like us, penetrating into the spirit.

When the Saviour appeared, the prejudiced Jews declared against him. And Jesus Christ himself, that their blindness might not be too much irritated, seems extremely reserved in the article of his divinity, meaning, says St. Chrysostom, insensibly to accustom his hearers to believe a mystery so very much above bare reason: his assuming the divine prerogative of pardoning sins, shocked all the by-standers; his most manifest miracles convinced not even those for whose relief they were operated, that he was God. When, with a modest circumlocution, he owned himself the Son of God before the high-priest's judgment seat, the high-priest, filled with indignation, rent his clothes, and cried out, Blasphemy! Before the mission of the Holy Ghost, the apostles themselves had not the least apprehension of their master's divinity. He asks them what the people think of him; and their answer is, that some took him for Elias, others for Jeremiah, or some other prophet; and it was by a particular revelation, that St. Peter knew Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of the living God.

The Jews being irreconcileably scandalized at the divinity of Jesus, have left no stone unturned to explode it; perverting the sense of their own oracles, or not applying them to the Messiah. They affirm that the name of God, Eloi, is not peculiar to the Deity; and that it is by sacred authors given to judges, to magistrates, and, in general, to all persons in authority: they do indeed quote a great number of passages which countenance this observation, but without in the least invalidating those strong and clear terms of the ancient oracles, which manifestly relate to the Messiah.

Lastly, say they, if the Saviour, and, after him, the evangelists, the apostles, and the primitive Christians, did call Jesus Son of God, this august term, in the gospel-times, imported no more than the contrary to the sons of Belial; that is, a good man, a servant of God, in opposition to a wicked man, or to one who does not fear God.

The Jews, besides denying Christ his quality of Messiah, and his divinity, have omitted nothing to render him contemptible, exposing his birth, life, and death, with all the ridicule,

virulence, and contumely, which their guilty rancour could suggest.

Of all the works which Jewish blindness has produced, none in extravagance and impiety exceed the ancient book intitled, *Sepher Toldos Jeschut*, which has been rescued from the worms by M. Vagenseil, in the second volume of his work entitled *Tela Ignea*.

This Sepher Toldos Jeschut has a most shocking history of the life of the Saviour, written with the utmost falsity and malice: for instance, they have dared to write that one Panther, or Pandera, who dwelt at Bethlehem, seduced a young woman, married to Jochanan; and the fruit of this foul commerce was a child, whom they named Jesus, or Jesu. The father being obliged to fly the place, withdrew to Babylon. As for young Jesus, he was sent to school; but, adds the author, he had the insolence to raise his head, and uncover himself before the priests, contrary to the usage, which was to appear in their presence with the head hanging down, and the face covered; a petulance for which he received a smart check. This occasioning an enquiry into his birth, it was, consequently, found to be impure, and he became exposed to public ignominy. This book was known so early as the second century: Celsus cites it with exultation, and Origen, in his ninth chapter, refutes it.

There is another book, which likewise bears the title of *Toledos Jesu*, published in 1705, by M. Huldric, which is more consonant with the evangelical history of the Saviour's birth, but swarms with the grossest anachronisms and other errors. It makes Christ to have been born and have died under Herod the great; and affirms that the complaint of Panther's adultery with Mary, the mother of Jesus, was brought before that prince.

The author, who calls himself Jonathan, and, if his word may be taken, was contemporary with Christ, and lived at Jerusalem, affirms that Herod, relatively to Jesus Christ, consulted the senators of a city in the land of Cesarea; but such an absurd author, with all his contradictions, we shall leave to himself.

These calumnies, however, serve to foment the implacable hatred of the Jews against the Christians and the gospel: so that they have stuck at nothing to falsify the chronology of the Old Testament, and to spread doubt and difficulties about the time of the Saviour's coming.

Ahmed-ben Cassum-al Anacousy, a Moor of Grenada, who lived towards the close of the sixteenth century, quotes

an ancient Arabic manuscript, found in a cave near Grenada, together with sixteen sheets of lead, on which some tales in Arabic characters were engraved. Don Pedro y Quinones, archbishop of Grenada, has certified this fact. These famous Grenadian sheets have been since carried to Rome, where, after an examination of several years, they were at last condemned as apocryphal, under the pontificate of Alexander VII. Their contents are only some fabulous tales concerning Mary and her son.

The name of Messiah, joined to the epithet false, is likewise given to those impostors who, at several times, have made it their business to deceive the Jewish nation. Some of these false Messiahs set up even before the coming of the true anointed of God. The wise Gamaliel, Acts, v. 34, &c. mentions one, named Theudas, whose history is to be found in Josephus's Antiquities, book xx. chap. ii. He boasted that he could pass the Jordan dry-footed, and was joined by considerable numbers; but the Romans coming to an action with his raw men, soon dispersed them; and taking the chief prisoner, set up his head in Jerusalem.

Gamaliel farther speaks of Judas, the Galilean, doubtless the same whom Josephus mentions in the twelfth chapter of the second book of his Jewish wars. He says, that this false prophet had got together nearly 30,000 men; but the Jewish historian is noted for hyperbole.

So early as the apostolic times, Simon, surnamed the Magician, made his appearance; and to such a degree had he seduced the people of Samaria, that they accounted to him the power of God. Acts, viii. 9.

In the years 178 and 179 of the Christian era, Adrian being then emperor, the false Messiah Barchochebas asserted his pretensions at the head of an army. Julius Severus being sent against him, hemmed in the insurgents at the city of Bither, which, after an obstinate siege, he carried; and Barchochebas being taken, was put to death. On this Adrian, as the best expedient for preventing the continual revolts of the Jews, issued an edict against their going to Jerusalem; and even guards were posted at the city gates, to keep them out.

Socrates, an ecclesiastical historian, relates in book ii. chap. xxxviii. that, in the year 434, a false Messiah started up in the island of Candia, under the name of Moses, and as the ancient deliverer of the Hebrews, raised from the dead, to effect a second deliverance for them.

The next century, in 530, saw in Palestine a false Messiah, named Julian. He recommended himself to the people, as a

great conqueror, who, at the head of his nation, should destroy all Christians whatever, and the Jews were so far seduced by his promises, that they ran to arms, and massacred great numbers of Christians. The emperor Justinian's forces engaging him, the false Christ was taken and executed.

In the beginning of the eighth century, Serenus, a Spanish Jew, aiming at the Messiahship, preached and gained followers; but the upshot was, that both followers and leader came to a miserable end.

The twelfth century produced several false Messiahs, particularly one in France, under Lewis the Younger; but both he and his adherents were hanged, without so much as the names of master or disciples being known.

The thirteenth century was still more fertile in false Messiahs: of these the more remarkable were seven or eight, who appeared in Arabia, in Persia, in Spain, and Moravia. One of them, who styled himself David el Re, is reckoned to have been a very great magician: his artifices so far succeeded with the Jews, that he saw himself at the head of a considerable party: but this fair prospect terminated in his being murdered.

James Zieglerne, a Moravian who lived in the middle of the sixteenth century, promulgated the approach of the Messiah's manifestation, assuring the people that this Messiah had been born fourteen years before, and that he himself had seen him at Strasburg; and also that hecarefully kept a sword and a sceptre, to put into his hands when he should be of age to teach.

In the year 1624, another Zieglerne confirmed the former prediction.

In the year 1666, Zabathei-Sevi, a native of Aleppo, gave himself out to be the Messiah, foretold by the Zieglernes. He began by preaching in the highways and fields, and, while his disciples admired him, the Turks laughed at his folly. It appears that at first his preaching had no very extraordinary success, for the chiefs of the Smyrna synagogue went so far as to pronounce sentence of death against him; but his punishment was mitigated to exile.

He contracted three marriages, without consummating any, saying it was beneath him. He took a partner, named Nathan Levi, who was to act the part of Elias, as the Messiah's harbinger. They repaired to Jerusalem, and Nathan there preached up Zabathei-Sevi, as the deliverer of the nations. The Jewish populace declared for him, whilst they who had any thing to lose, anathematised him.

Sevi, to shun the storm, withdrew to Constantinople, and from thence to Smyrna. Nathan Levi deputed to him four ambassadors, who, besides acknowledging his dignity, did him homage publicly as the Messiah. This embassy dazzled the commonalty, and even some doctors, who declared Zabathei-Sevi, as the Messiah, and king of the Hebrews; but the Smyrna synagogue condemned their king to be impaled.

Zabathei put himself under the protection of the cadi of Smyrna, and soon had on his side the whole Jewish people. He even had two thrones set up, one for himself and the other for his favourite spouse, assuming the title of King of Kings. His brother Sevi he created king of Judah; and to the Jews themselves he gave the most positive assurances, that the Ottoman empire should soon be their own. In the height of his insolence he had the emperor's name struck out of the Jewish liturgy, and his own substituted in its stead.

He was confined in the castle of the Dardanelles, and the Jews gave out that his life was spared only because the Turks very well knew him to be immortal. The governor of the Dardanelles made a great fortune by the presents which the Jews poured on him for leave to visit their king, their Messiah, who in his fetters maintained his dignity, and even the ceremony of kissing his feet.

The Sultan, however, who then kept his court at Adrianople, was for putting an end to this farce; and, sending for Sevi, told him that if he was the Messiah, he must be invulnerable. This Sevi allowed; but on the grand seignior's ordering him to be placed as a mark for his icoglans, or pages, to discharge their arrows at, the Messiah owned that he was not invulnerable, and protested that God sent him only to bear testimony to the holy Mahometan religion. After undergoing a severe flagellation by the ministers of the law, he turned Mahometan, and lived and died despised both by Jews and Mussulmans. This adventure has brought the profession of a false Messiah into such disrepute, that since Sevi nobody has taken it up.

METAMORPHOSIS—METEMPSYCHOSIS.

Is it not very natural, that all the various metamorphoses with which the earth may be said to be covered, should have led the orientals, whose imagination is so luxuriant, to imagine that our souls passed from one body to another? An almost

imperceptible point grows to be a worm, and this worm becomes a butterfly; an acorn changes to an oak; an egg to a bird; water becomes clouds and thunder; wood is turned into fire and ashes; in a word, all nature is more or less a metamorphosis. Souls, being accounted tenuous forms, were soon concluded to partake of that property, which was sensibly seen in more dense and heavy bodies. The metempsychosis, is, perhaps, the most ancient doctrine in the known world, and still prevails in a great part of India and China.

It is likewise very natural, that those ancient fables, collected and embellished by Ovid in his admirable work, took rise from the several metamorphoses with which our eyes are conversant. The very Jews have not been without their metamorphoses. If Niobe was changed into marble, Hedith, Lot's wife, was turned into salt. As Euridice was detained in hell for looking back, a like indiscretion cost Lot's wife her human nature. The country town in Phrygia, where lived the hospitable Baucis and Philemon, is changed into a lake; the same submersion has befallen Sodom. The daughters of Anus turned water into oil; the Scripture mentions a change something similar, but more sacred and real. Cadmus was turned into a serpent, and the like was seen in Aaron's rod.

The pagan deities very often assumed a human disguise; and, when angels appeared to the Jews, it was always as men; with Abraham they partook of a repast. St. Paul, in his epistle to the Corinthians, says *Aggelos Satan me kolaphizei:* the messenger of Satan cuffed him.

MIRACLE.

A MIRACLE, in the energetic sense of the word, means something wonderful; and thus every thing is a miracle. The surprising order of nature, the rotation of a hundred millions of globes round a million of suns, the activity of light, the life of animals, are perpetual miracles. According to the received notion, however, a miracle is a violation of the divine and eternal laws. An eclipse of the sun and moon, a dead man walking two leagues with his head in his hands, are what we call a miracle.

Several naturalists affirm, that in this sense, there are no miracles; and their arguments are these:

A miracle is a breach of the mathematical, divine, immutable, eternal laws; now this definition alone makes a miracle a contradiction in terms. A law cannot be both immutable and

broken; but it is answered, Cannot a law of God's making be suspended by its author? They boldly answer, No; and it cannot be, that the infinitely wise Being should have made laws, and afterwards break them. If, say they, he made any alteration in this machine, it would be to make it go the better: now, it is clear, that God has framed this immense machine as good as it possibly could be; if he saw that any imperfection would hereafter be occasioned, by the nature of the materials, he at first provided against any such future defect, so that there would be no cause for any after-change.

Besides, God can do nothing without reason; now what reason should induce him to disfigure his own work for any time?

It is for man's sake, say their opponents. It is to be hoped, then, answer they, that it is for the sake of all men, it being impossible to conceive that the divine nature should work for some particular men, and not for all mankind; and even all mankind is but a very small thing; less than an ant's nest, in comparison of all the beings which fill the immensity of space. Now, what can be more low and absurd, than to imagine, that the infinite Being will, for the sake of three or four hundred ants, on that little clod of mud, suspend or alter the eternal play of those immense springs, on which depends the motion of the universe.

But supposing that God had been pleased to distinguish a small number of men by particular favours, must he, therefore, alter what he has settled for all times and all places? He certainly can favour his creatures without any such inconstancy and change? his favours are comprised in his very laws; every thing has been wisely contrived and arranged for their good; and they all irrevocably obey the force which he has originally implanted in nature.

Wherefore is God to work a miracle? to accomplish a design he has for some living beings? that is making God to say, I have not been able, by the fabric of the universe, by my divine decrees, by my eternal laws, to compass such a design: I see I must make an alteration in my eternal ideas, my immutable laws, as what I intended cannot be executed by those means. This would be an acknowledgment of weakness, not a declaration of power; it would be the most inconceivable contradiction. So that, to suppose God works miracles, is, (if men can insult God,) a downright insult to him: it is no less than saying to him, You are a weak and inconsistent Being. Therefore, to believe miracles is an absurdity; it is, in some measure, scandalizing the deity.

A further reply to these philosophers, is, Your crying up the immutability of the Supreme Being, the eternity of his laws, with the regularity of his infinite worlds, signify nothing; our small heap of dirt has been covered with miracles: in history, prodigies are as frequent as natural events. The daughters of the high-priest Anius, changed whatever they would into wine or oil; Athalida, daughter of Mercury, rose from the dead several times; Esculapius restored Hippolytus; Hercules delivered Alcestes from death; Theros returned upon earth after staying a fortnight in the infernal regions; Romulus and Remus were the issue of a god and a vestal; the palladium dropped from heaven into the city of Troy; Berenice's tresses became a constellation; Baucis and Philemon's hut was changed into a stately temple; Orpheus's head uttered oracles after his death; the walls of Thebes were formed before numbers of Greeks, by stones moving of themselves, to the sound of a flute; innumerable cures were performed in Esculapius's temple; and we have still monuments with the names of ocular witnesses to his miracles.

Name me one nation, where incredible prodigies have not been performed, especially in times when reading and writing were little known.

All the answer unbelieving philosophers give to these objections, is a sneer and a shrug; but those who profess Christianity, say, We make no doubt of the miracles wrought within our holy religion; yet it is by faith we believe them, and not by reason; as for the latter, we turn a deaf ear to it; for we know, that when faith speaks, reason is to be mute. The miracles of Jesus Christ and his apostles we are fully and firmly persuaded of; but allow us to doubt a little of several others: indulge us, for instance, in suspending our judgment, concerning what is related by a weak man (Gregory,) who yet has been surnamed the Great. He affirms, that a little monk got such a custom of working miracles, that, at length, the prior forbade him to exercise his supernatural talent. The monk conformed to the order; but, one day, seeing a bricklayer falling from the roof of a house, he hesitated between monastical obedience and charity, in saving the poor man's life, and, only ordering him to remain in the air till he got orders, ran to acquaint the prior with the case. The prior gave him absolution for the sin of beginning a miracle without leave, and allowed him to go through with it, but never to do the like again. It is granted to philosophers, that this story may be a little mistrusted.

But it is again said to them, How will you dare to deny, that

St. Gervase and St. Protais appeared in a dream to St. Ambrose, and informed him of the place where their reliques lay; that St. Ambrose had them taken up; and that a blind man was cured by them? St. Austin was then at Milan, and it is he who relates this miracle, in his *City of God*, book xxii. and that it was performed "*immenso populo teste.*" Here is a miracle with every circumstance of proof. Philosophers, however, say, that they believe nothing at all of Gervase and Protais appearing; that to know where the remains of their carcasses lie, is a thing of no concern to mankind; and that they give no more credit to that blind man, than to Vespasian; that it is a useless miracle; that God does nothing uselessly; in a word, they abide immovably by their principles. My regard for saints Gervase and Protais will not allow me to side with those philosophers; I only give an account of their incredulity. They are vastly fond of a passage of Lucian, in the death of Peregrinus, "A dexterous juggler, turning Christian, is sure of making his fortune;" but Lucian is a profane author, and, of course, should be of no weight among us.

These philosophers cannot bring themselves to believe the miracles of the second century, though eye-witnesses have in writing declared, that the bishop of Smyrna, St. Polycarp, having, pursuant to the sentence passed on him, been thrown into a blazing fire, they heard a voice from heaven calling out, "Cheer up, Polycarp; be strong in the Lord, and show thyself a man;" at which the flames of the pile, drawing back from his body, formed a fiery canopy over his head, and out of the pile flew a dove: at last, they were obliged to cut off the good bishop's head. To what purpose was this miracle? say unbelievers; how came it, that the flames deviated from their nature, and the executioner's axe had the natural effect? How is it, that so many martyrs, after coming safe and sound out of boiling oil, have fallen under the edge of the sword?

The usual answer is, that such was God's will; but the philosophers will believe no such thing, unless they had seen it with their own eyes.

They who improve their reasonings by study, will tell you, that the fathers of the church have themselves often owned, that miracles were ceased in their time. St. Chrysostom says expressly, "that the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit were given even to the unworthy, because the church then stood in need of miracles: but, at present, they are not so much as given to the worthy, the church no longer standing in need of them." Afterwards, he acknowledges, that there was no-

body then who raised the dead, or so much as cured the sick.

St. Austin himself, as if he had forgot the miracle of Gervase and Protais, says in his *City of God*, "Why are those miracles, which were performed some time ago, at present ceased?" and he gives the same reason, "*Cur, inquiunt, nunc illa miracula quæ prædicatis facta esse, non fiunt? Possem quidem dicere, necessaria prius fuisse, quam crederet mundus, ad hoc ut crederet mundus.*"

It is objected to the philosophers, that St. Austin, notwithstanding this avowal, speaks of an old cobbler at Hippo, who, having lost his cloak, went to pray for relief at the chapel of the Twenty Martyrs, and, in his return home, found a fish, in the body of which was discovered a gold ring: the cook who dressed it, giving it to the cobbler, said, There is a present for you from the Twenty Martyrs.

To this the philosophers answer, that in that story there is nothing contrary to the laws of nature; that a fish may very naturally have swallowed a gold ring; and that there is no miracle in the cook's giving that ring to the cobbler.

If the philosophers are put in mind, that, according to St. Jerome, in his *Life of the Hermit Paul*, this devout person had several conversations with satyrs and fauns; that a raven, for thirty years together, daily brought him half a loaf for his dinner, and a whole loaf the day St. Anthony paid him a visit; they may still reply, that nothing of all this is absolutely contrary to nature; that satyrs and fauns may have existed; and that, after all, if this story be a puerility, it does not in the least affect the real miracles of our Saviour and his apostles. Several good Christians have rejected the story of St. Simon Stilites, written by Theodoret. Many miracles, accounted authentic in the Greek church, have been questioned by Latin writers; so, in return, Latin miracles have been suspected by the Greeks: in process of time, came the Protestants, who have made very free with the miracles of both churches.

A learned Jesuit, Ospinian, who preached a long time in the Indies, complains, that neither his brethren nor himself could ever perform one single miracle. Xavier, in several letters, laments his not having the gift of tongues. He says, that he is but as a dumb image among the Japanese; yet, according to the narrative of the Jesuits, he restored eight dead persons to life, and that is a great many; but it must withal be considered, that the scene of those restorations was six thousand leagues off. Some persons, of latter times, make the suppression of the Jesuits, in France, a much greater miracle

than all those of Xavier and Ignatius put together. Be that as it may, all Christians hold the miracles of Jesus Christ and his apostles to be indisputably true and real, but allow that some miracles of our modern times, and which are without any certain authenticity, may very well be doubted of.

It were to be wished, for the legal verification of a miracle, that it should be performed before the Academy of Sciences, at Paris, or the Royal Society, or the College of Physicians, at London, with a detachment of guards to keep off the people, whose tumultuous indiscretion might hinder the performance of the miracle.

A philosopher was one day asked, what he would say, if the sun should stand still; that is, if the motion of the earth round that body ceased; if all the dead arose; and if all the mountains went and threw themselves into the sea; and all this to prove some important truth; we will suppose versatile grace. What should I say? answered the philosopher; I would turn Manichee, and say, that there is a principle which undoes what the other has done.

MOSES.

It has been the groundless opinion of many learned men, that the Pentateuch cannot have been written by Moses. They say, that, according to the Scripture itself, the first known copy was found in the time of king Josias, and that this only copy was brought to the king, by Saphan the scribe. Now, the interval from Moses to this circumstance of Saphan the scribe, according to the Hebrew computation, makes a space of 1167 years; for God appeared to Moses in the burning bush, in the year of the world, 2213, and Saphan the scribe made public the book of the law, in the year of the world, 3380. This book, which had been found under Josias, was unknown till the return from the captivity of Babylon; and Esdras is said, by divine inspiration, to have brought to light all the sacred writings.

But, whether Esdras, or any other person, was the compiler of this book, is absolutely a matter of indifference, admitting it to be inspired. The Pentateuch does not say that Moses was the author of it: so that it might, without profaneness, be attributed to any other sacred penman, if the church had not positively decided, that it was written by Moses.

Some adversaries add, that no prophet has quoted any of the books of the Pentateuch; that not the least mention is made

of it in the Psalms; in the books attributed to Solomon; nor in Jeremiah, nor in Isaiah; nor, in a word, in any canonical book of the Jews. Then the words, answering to those of Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, Leviticus, and Deuteronomy, are not to be found in any other book, received as authentic, by that nation.

Others more sanguine, have put the following questions:

1. In what language could Moses have written in a wilderness? It could be only in the Egyptian, for, from this very book, it is clear, that Moses and his whole people were born in Egypt, and very probably acquainted with no other language. The Egyptians were yet strangers to the use of the papyrus; they had their hieroglyphics cut in marble and wood: the very tables of the commandments are said to have been engraven on stone: so that here were five volumes to be engraved on polished stones, a work of prodigious time and labour!

2. Is it probable, that in a wilderness, where the Jewish people had neither shoemaker nor tailor, and where the God of the universe was obliged to work a continual miracle, to preserve their old clothes and shoes, they should have among them persons of such skill, as to engrave the five books of the Pentateuch on marble or wood? It will be said, that workmen were found among them who could make a golden calf in one night, and afterwards reduce the gold to dust, (an operation beyond the skill of common chemistry; an art not yet invented;) who could build the tabernacle, adorn it with thirty-four brass pillars, with silver chapiters; who wove and embroidered linen veils with hyacinth, purple, and scarlet: but this very thing strengthens the adversaries' opinion; and they rejoin, that it is not in nature that such curious works should have been made in a desert, and under the want of every thing; that shoes and coats would have been the things to have begun with; that people wanting necessaries scarcely think of luxury; and that to say, they had founders, engravers, carvers, dyers, and embroiderers, when they had not so much as clothes, sandals, nor bread, is gross and palpable contradiction.

3. If Moses had written the first chapter of Genesis, would the reading of that chapter have been forbidden to all young people? Would the legislator be treated with such disregard? Had it been Moses who said, that God punishes the iniquities of the fathers to the fourth generation, would Ezekiel have presumed to say the contrary?

4. Had Moses written Leviticus, could he have contradicted

himself in Deuteronomy? Leviticus forbids the marrying a brother's wife, Deuteronomy enjoins it.

5. Would Moses have spoken of towns which were not known in his time? Would he have said, that towns, which, relatively to him, lay east of the Jordan, were west of that river?

6. Would he have assigned, to the Levites, forty-eight towns, in a country which never had ten; and in a wilderness, where he had never so much as a house during all his wanderings?

7. Would he have laid down rules for the Jewish kings, whilst that people not only had no kings, but abhorred them, and there was no probability that they would ever have any? How! would Moses have given precepts for the conduct of kings, who did not come till about five hundred years after him, and say nothing concerning the judges and high-priests, his immediate successors? Does not this reflection incline one to believe, that the Pentateuch was written in the time of the kings; and that the ceremonies instituted by Moses were only traditional?

8. Is it possible, that he should say to the Jews, ye were six hundred thousand men, when I brought you out of the land of Egypt, under the protection of your God? Would not the Jews have answered, Then you must have been a faint-hearted creature, not to have led us against Pharaoh; he had not an army of two hundred thousand men to oppose us. Egypt never had so many men on foot; we should easily have defeated him, and made ourselves master of his country. How! the God who speaks to you, has, to please us, killed all the first-born in Egypt; and, if that country contained three hundred thousand families, there is three hundred thousand men carried off in one night, to revenge us; and you have not seconded your God. You have not given us that fruitful country, which was likewise defenceless. You made us come out of Egypt, like thieves and poltroons, that we might perish in wildernesses, among rocks and precipices: you might, at least, have led us by the direct way, into that land of Canaan, to which we have no right, but which you promised us, and have not yet brought us thither.

It was natural, that, from the land of Goshen, we should have taken the way towards Tyre and Sidon, along the Mediterranean: but you have made us traverse almost the isthmus of Suez, have brought us again into Egypt, as far as beyond Memphis, and, behold, we are now at Bel-Sephon, on the Red Sea, with the land of Canaan behind us, after a march of four-

score leagues, in that very country which we were for shunning; and, after all, in imminent danger of perishing, either by the sea, or Pharaoh's army.

Had your intention been to deliver us up to our enemies, what other measures could you have taken? God, you say, has saved us by a miracle; the sea opened to let us pass through; but, after such kindness, should you have brought us to die with hunger and weariness, in the horrible deserts of Ethan, Kadesh-Barnea, Mara, Elim, Oreb, and Sinai? All our fathers perished in those dreadful wildernesses, and, after forty such calamitous years, you come and tell us, that God took particular care of our fathers.

This is what those murmuring Jews, those perverse children of vagabond fathers, who died in the deserts, might have said to Moses, had he read Exodus and Genesis to them: and what ought they not to have said, and even to have done, on account of the golden calf? How! you dare tell us, that your brother made a golden calf for our fathers, whilst you were with God on the mount; you, who sometimes say, that you spoke to God face to face, and sometimes, that you could only see his hinder parts. Well, but you were with God, and your brother cast a golden calf in one day, and set it up for us to worship; but, instead of punishing your worthless brother, you made him our high-priest, and order your Levites to slay three-and-twenty thousand of your people. Would our fathers have tamely suffered this? Would they have let themselves been knocked down by sanguinary priests, like so many victims? You further tell us, as if this butchery was not sufficient, that another time you ordered twenty-four thousand of your poor followers to be massacred, because one of them had lain with a Midianite, and you yourself married a Midianite; and, after this, you add, that you are the meekest of men. A few more such meek procedures would have made an end of mankind.

No, had you been capable of such cruelty; had you been able to carry it into execution, you would have been the most barbarous of men: it would have been so enormous a guilt, that no punishment could have been equal to it.

These are pretty nearly the objections made by the learned, to those who hold Moses to have been the author of the Pentateuch. But these rejoin, that the ways of God are not like those of men: that God, by a wisdom unknown to us, has tried and alternately protected and forsaken his people; that the Jews themselves, for above two thousand years, have universally believed Moses to be the author of those books; that

the church, which has succeeded to the synagogue, and is endued with the like infallibility, has decided this point of controversy; and that the learned should keep silence when the church speaks.

PETER.

In French, Pierre; in Italian, Piero or Pietro; in Spanish, Pedro; in Latin, Petrus; in Greek, Petros; and in Hebrew, Cepha.

How comes it that Peter's successors have had so much power in the west, and none in the east? This is asking why the bishops of Wurtzburg and Saltzburg have in troublesome times assumed royal prerogatives, whilst the Greek bishops have remained subjects. Time, opportunity, and the ambition of some, and the weakness of others, do every thing in this world, and ever will. To these troubles was added opinion, and opinion rules men; not that they in reality have a very determinate opinion, but they are as tenacious of words.

It is related in the Gospel, that Jesus said to Peter, "I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." The sticklers for the bishop of Rome maintained, about the eleventh century, that he who gives the greater gives the less; that the heavens encompassed the earth; and that Peter having the keys of the containing, had also the keys of the contents. If by the heavens we mean all the stars and all the planets, then the keys given to Simon Barjona, surnamed Peter, were a *passe-partout:* master-key. If by the heavens are meant the clouds, the atmosphere, the ether, the space in which the planets roll, there are few locksmiths, says Meursius, who can make a key to such doors.

In Palestine keys were a wooden peg, fastened with a leathern thong. Jesus says to Bar-jona, "What thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven." From this, the Pope's theologians have inferred, that the popes are invested with a power of binding and loosening subjects from the oath of allegiance to their kings, and of disposing of all kingdoms at their pleasure; a notable inference indeed! The commons, at a general assembly of the states of France, in 1302, in their petition to the king, say that Boniface VIII. was a scoundrel, believing that God bound and imprisoned in heaven all whom Boniface bound on earth. A famous German Lutheran (I think it was Melancthon), could hardly believe that Jesus should have said to Simon Bar-jona, Cepha or Cephas, "Thou

art Peter, and on this rock will I build my church." He could not conceive that God had made use of such a play of words, so very extraordinary a pun, and that the Pope's power was founded on a quibble.

Peter has been thought to have been the first bishop of Rome; but it is sufficiently known that then, and for a long time after, there was no particular see. It was not till towards the end of the second century that the Christians were moulded into a regular body.

It is possible that St. Peter went to Rome; it is even possible that he was crucified with his head downwards, though that was not customary; but of all this we have no proof. A letter bearing his name is still extant, in which he says, that he is at Babylon. Judicious canonists will have this Babylon to mean Rome; so that, had he dated his letter from Rome, it might have been inferred, that it had been written from Babylon. Such inferences are of a long standing; and it is thus that the world has been governed.

A very pious man, who had been exorbitantly imposed on at Rome, in relation to the purchase of a benefice (a practice which is called simony), being asked whether he thought Simon Peter had ever been in that country, answered, I see no marks of Peter's having been there, but I am very certain Simon was.

As to Peter's person, Paul is not the only one who has taken offence at his behaviour: both he and his successors have often been withstood to their face. St. Paul keenly reproached him for eating prohibited meats, as pork, puddings, hare, eels, &c. Peter, in justification of himself, alledged that about the sixth hour he had seen the heavens opened, and a large table-cloth full of eels, beasts, and birds, descending from the four quarters of the heavens; and that the voice of an angel called out, "Kill, and eat." "Probably," says Wolaston, "it was the same voice which has called out to so many popes, 'Kill every body, and eat up the people's substance.'"

Casauban could not approve of Peter's behaviour to Ananias and his wife, who were a good sort of people: What right, says he, had a Jew, a slave under the Romans, to order or allow all who believed in Jesus to sell their substance, and lay the produce at his feet. Were an anabaptist preacher in London to order his brethren to bring him all their money, would he not be taken up as a mover of sedition, and a robber, and as such sent to Tyburn? Was it not a horrid thing to strike Ananias dead, only because out of the money for

which he had sold his estate, he secretly reserved a few pounds against a rainy day, bringing the far greater part to Peter? Scarcely was the breath out of Ananias's body, when in comes his wife. Peter, instead of kindly informing her that he had just killed her husband for keeping a few pence, and telling her to take care of what she had, allures her into the snare. He asks her whether her husband had brought in all his money for the saints: the poor woman answers, Yes; and instantly drops down dead. Somewhat hard this!

Corringius asks why Peter, who thus demolishes those who brought him alms, did not rather go and kill all the doctors who had a hand in putting Jesus to death, and had caused himself to be scourged several times. Fie, Peter: to kill two Christians, who had brought you a good purse of money; and they who crucified your God, you allow to live!

It is to be supposed that Corringius, when he put forth these bold questions, was not in a country subject to the inquisition. Erasmus has, concerning Peter, a very singular remark,—that the head of the Christian religion began his apostleship by denying Jesus Christ; and the high-priest of Judaism began his ministry by making a golden calf, and worshipping it.

However it be, Peter is transmitted to us as being poor, and humbly instructing the poor. He is like those founders of orders who lived in indigence, but whose successors are become great men.

The pope, St. Peter's successor, has both won and lost: however he has still remaining, in the several parts of the world, besides his immediate subjects, about fifty millions of people who, in many articles, acknowledge his laws.

To have a master three or four hundred leagues from one's home; to forbear thinking till that man shall have seemed to think; not to dare to try definitively a process between our fellow citizens, but by commissioners of this foreigner's nomination: to transgress the laws of one's country, by which a person is restrained from marrying his niece, and yet to render this a legitimate marriage, by giving a still more considerable sum to this foreign master; not to dare take possession of any fields or vineyards, conferred by one's own sovereign, without paying a large sum to this foreign master; not to dare plough one's grounds on a day appointed by a foreigner, for commemorating an unknown person, whom he has placed in heaven by his own private authority: these are the advantages of acknowledging a pope; these are the liberties of the Gallican church.

Other nations there are who carry submission still further. We have, in our times, seen a sovereign ask the pope leave to bring to a trial, in his royal court of justice, some monks, accused of regicide, fail in his solicitations for leave, and not dare to try those wretches.

It is well known that formerly the pope's power was still of greater extent. They were much superior to the gods of antiquity; for those deities were only imagined to dispose of empires, but the popes disposed of them in reality.

Sturbinus says, that they who doubt of the pope's divinity and infallibility are excusable, when it is considered, that St. Peter's see has been profaned by forty schisms, and twenty-seven of them have been attended with murders, massacres, and wars.

That Stephen VII., a priest's son, had his predecessor, Formosus, dug up, and the corpse's head cut off.

That Sergius III. was convicted of assassinations, and had a son by Marozia, who inherited the papacy.

That John X., Theodoras's gallant, was strangled in his bed.

That John XI., son of Sergius III., was known only for his scandalous intemperance.

That John XII. was murdered at his strumpet's house.

That Benedict IX. bought the pontificate, and sold it again.

That Gregory VII. was the author of civil wars, which were continually prosecuted by his successors, for the space of five hundred years.

That, lastly, among so many debauched, ambitious, and sanguinary popes, there has been an Alexander VI., whose name always excites no less horror and detestation than those of Nero and Caligula.

This, it is said, proves the divinity of their character, that it should have subsisted amidst so many crimes; but, had the behaviour of the caliphs been still more flagitious and execrable, they would then have been still more divine. This is Dermius's argument; but the Jesuits have answered him.

PREJUDICES.

Prejudice is an opinion void of judgment; thus every where many opinions are instilled into children before they are able to judge.

There are universal and necessary prejudices, and such are

essential to virtue. In every country children are taught to believe in a God, who punishes and rewards; to respect and love their father and mother; to hold theft a crime, and a selfish lie a vice, before they can so much as guess what vice or virtue is. Thus there are very good prejudices, and these are such as, on being brought to the test, judgment ratifies.

Sentiment is not mere prejudice: it is much stronger. It is not because the mother has been told that she must love her son, that she loves him; she happily cannot help her fondness for him. It is not from prejudice that a man runs to assist an unknown child, whom a beast is ready to devour, or who is in any other danger.

But it is from mere prejudice that you respect a man dressed in a particular manner, and grave in his carriage and discourse. Your parents have told you to bow to such a man; thus you come to respect him, before you know whether he deserves your respect. Being grown up, and your knowledge enlarged, you begin to see that this man is a hypocrite, eaten up with pride, selfishness, and craft; hereupon you despise what you venerated, and prejudice is superseded by judgment. You have, from prejudice, believed the fables with which you were amused in your childhood. You are told that the Titans waged war against the gods; and that Venus was in love with Adonis. These fables at twelve years of age, go down with you as realities: but at twenty you perceive them to be only ingenious allegories.

Let us briefly, for order sake, examine the different sorts of prejudices; we may, perhaps, find ourselves like those who perceived that, at time of the Missisippi scheme, they had been calculating imaginary riches.

PREJUDICES OF THE SENSES.

Is it not very odd that our eyes always deceive us, even when we see very well? whereas we are never deceived by our ears. If a sound ear hears these words, You are handsome; I love you: it is very certain that the person speaking did not say, I hate you; you are ugly. But the apparent smoothness of a looking-glass is a deception; a microscope shows the surface to be, in reality, very rugged. The sun appears to be but about two feet in diameter: whereas it is demonstrated to be a million of times larger than the earth.

God has, apparently, put truth in your ears and error in your eyes: but study optics, and you will find that God has

not imposed on you; and that it is impossible, in the present state of things, objects should appear otherwise than you see them.

PHYSICAL PREJUDICES.

That the sun rises and sets, and that the earth is immoveable, are prejudices naturally imbibed: but that lobsters are good for the blood, because in boiling they turn red; that eels cure the palsy because of their frisking; that the moon has an influence on diseases, because a stronger symptom of a fever was observed in a patient in the wane of the moon; these notions, with a thousand others, were entertained by the empirics of old, who judged without reasoning, and led others into their mistakes.

HISTORICAL PREJUDICES.

Most stories have been credited without examination, and such belief is a prejudice. Fabius Pictor relates that, several ages before him, a vestal virgin, of the city of Alba, going with her pitcher to draw water, was ravished, and brought into the world Romulus and Remus; and that these twins were suckled by a she-wolf, &c. This fable the Roman people greedily swallowed, without examining whether at that time vestal virgins were known in Latium; whether it was likely that a king's daughter should go out of her convent, with a pitcher in her hand; and whether it was agreeable to nature, that a she-wolf, so far from eating two infants, should suckle them. The prejudice took root.

A monk wrote, that Clovis, being in great danger at the battle of Tolbiac, made a vow, if he escaped safe, to turn Christian: but is it natural, in such an exigency, to apply to a foreign deity? Is it not in extremities, that our native religion acts with the greatest force? What Christian in a battle against the Turks, would not call on the Blessed Virgin rather than on Mahomet? It is added, that a dove brought a phial in its bill for anointing Clovis; and that an angel brought the oriflamme, or banner, to be carried before him. All such tales prejudice readily credits; but they who are acquainted with human nature well know, that both the usurpers Clovis and Rollo turned Christians that they might more safely rule Christians, as the Turks, on becoming masters of Constantinople, turned Mussulmans, to ingratiate themselves with Mussulmans.

RELIGIOUS PREJUDICES.

If your nurse has told you, that Ceres presides over grain; or that Vishnou and Xaca have, several times, become men; or that Sagmoncodom came upon earth, and cut down a forest: or that Odin expects you in his hall, towards Jutland; or that Mahomet, or some other, has made a journey into heaven; lastly, if your governor afterwards inculcates into your brain the traces made in it by your nurse, you will never get rid of them. Should your judgment attempt to efface these prejudices, your acquaintance, and especially the female part, will charge you with impiety; then the dervise, lest his income may suffer curtailment, will accuse you to the cadi, who will do his best to have you impaled, for he would have all under him blockheads, thinking that they make the tamest subjects: and thus things will go on, till your accquaintance, the dervise, and the cadi, shall perceive that folly does no good, and that persecution is abominable.

RELIGION.

FIRST QUESTION.

Dr. Warburton, bishop of Gloucester, author of one of the most learned pieces that ever appeared, in vol. i. page 8, expresses himself to this purpose: "A religion, or society, not founded on the belief of a future state, ought to be supported by an extraordinary providence: the Jewish religion was not founded on the belief of a future state; therefore, it must have been supported by an extraordinary providence."

Several divines have declared against him, and disputant like, have retorted his argument on himself; "A religion not founded on the doctrine of the soul's immortality, and eternal rewards, must be false. Now, Judaism had no such tenets; therefore Judaism, so far from being supported by providence, was, according to your principles, a false and savage religion, which denied any such thing as providence."

Others of the bishop's adversaries maintained, that the immortality of the soul was known amongst the Jews, even in Moses's time; but he very evidently proved against them, that neither in the Decalogue, nor Leviticus, nor Deuteronomy, is one single word said of this belief; and that it is ridiculous to go about wresting and corrupting a few passages of the

other books, in support of a truth, about which their book of laws is silent.

The bishop, though he composed four volumes to demonstrate, that the Jewish law proposed neither punishments nor rewards after death, has not been able to give his adversaries any very satisfactory answer. They urged, that "either Moses was acquainted with this doctrine, and then he deceived the Jews in not making it public; or he was ignorant of it, and, if so, he was incapable of founding a good religion.—Indeed, had the religion been good, why was it abolished? A true religion should suit all times and places; it should be like the light of the sun, which shines in all lands, and throughout all generations."

This prelate, with all his erudition and sagacity, has been hard put to it, in making his way through all these difficulties: but what system is without difficulties?

SECOND QUESTION.

Another learned person, a much greater philosopher, and one of the most profound metaphysicians of the times, produces strong reasons to prove, that the first religion was Polytheism; and that, before improved reason came to see there could be only one Supreme Being, men began with believing several gods. I, on the contrary, presume to believe, that they began with worshipping only one God, and that human weakness adopted several others afterwards; and I conceive the thing to be thus:—

It is not to be doubted, that villages and country towns were prior to large cities; and that men were divided into small republics before they were united in large empires. It is very natural, that a town, terrified at the thunder; distressed by the ruin of its harvest; insulted by a neighbouring town; daily feeling its weakness, and every where perceiving an invisible power, soon came to say, There is some being above us, which does us good and hurt.

It seems to me impossible, that they should have said, There are two powers: for wherefore several? In every thing we begin with the simple, then proceed to the compound, and often an improvement of knowledge brings us back again to the simple. This is the process of the human mind.

Which being was first worshipped? was it the sun? was it the moon? I can hardly believe it. Only let us take a view of children, they are pretty nearly on a footing with ignorant men. The beauty and benefit of that luminous body, which

animates nature, make no impression on them; as insensible are they of the conveniencies we derive from the moon, or of the regular variations of its course; they do not so much as think of these things; they are accustomed to them. What men do not fear, they never worship. Children look up to the sky with as much indifference as on the ground; but, at a tempest, the poor creatures tremble, and run and hide themselves. I am inclined to think it was so with primitive men. They who first observed the course of the heavenly bodies, and brought them to be objects of admiration and worship, must necessarily have had a tincture of philosophy: the error was too exalted for rude, illiterate husbandmen.

Thus the cry of a village would have been no more than this: There is a power which thunders, which sends down hail on us, which causes our children to die; let us, by all means, appease it; but which way? why, we see, that little presents will sooth angry people, let us try what little presents will do with this power. He must also, to be sure, have a name or title; and that, which naturally presents itself first, is chief, master, lord: thus is this power called Lord. Hence, it probably was, that the first Egyptians called their god, Knef; the Syrians, Adoni: the neighbouring nations, Baal or Bel, or Melch or Moloc; the Scythians, Pape; all words signifying lord, master.

In like manner almost all America was found to be divided into multitudes of little colonies, each with their patron deity. The Mexicans and Peruvians, themselves, who were large nations, had but one only god; the former worshipping Mango Kapack, the other the god of war, whom they called Vilipusti, as the Hebrews had styled their Lord, Sabaoth.

It is not from any superiority or exercise of reason, that all nations began with worshipping only one deity; for, had they been philosophers, they would have worshipped the God of universal nature, not the god of a village; they would have examined the infinite testimonies acknowledged, of a creating and preserving Being; but they examined nothing: they only perceived, and such is the progress of our weak understanding. Every town perceived its weakness, and want of a powerful protector. This tutelary and terrible being they fancied to reside in a neighbouring forest, or mountain, or in a cloud. They fancied only one such power, because, in war, the town had but one chief: this being they imagined to be corporeal, it being impossible they could have any other idea. They could not but believe that the neighbouring town had also its god. Accordingly, Jephthah says to the inhabitants of Moab, "You

lawfully possess what your god Chamos has made you conquer; and you ought to let us quietly enjoy what our god has given us by his victories."

This speech, from one foreigner to another, is very remarkable. The Jews and Moabites had ousted the natives, with no other right than force: and one says to the other, Thy god has supported thee in thy usurpation, allow my God likewise to support me in mine.

Jeremiah and Amos both ask, "Wherefore has the god Moloch seized on the country of Gad?" These passages show, that antiquity attributed a guardian god to every country, and traces of this theology are likewise to be met with in Homer.

It is very natural, that, from the heat of fancy and a vague increase in knowledge, men soon multiplied their gods, and assigned guardians to the elements, seas, forests, springs, and fields. The more they surveyed the heavenly bodies, the greater must their astonishment have been. Well might they, who worshipped the deity of a brook, pay their adoration to the sun; and, the first step being taken, the earth was soon covered with deities; so that, at length, cats and onions came to be worshipped.

However, time must necessarily improve reason; accordingly it produced some philosophers, who saw, that neither onions nor cats, nor even the heavenly bodies, had any share in the disposition of nature. All those philosophers, Babylonians, Persians, Egyptians, Scythians, Greeks, and Romans, acknowledged only one Supreme God, rewarding and punishing.

This they did not immediately make known to the people, for a word against onions and cats, spoken before old women and priests, would have cost a man his life: those good people would have stoned him. He who should have ridiculed some Egyptians, for eating their gods, would have been eaten himself, since Juvenal relates as a fact, that, in a controversial dispute, an Egyptian was killed and eaten quite raw!

Well! what was to be done? Orpheus and others institute mysteries, which the initiated swear, by execrable oaths, never to reveal: and of these mysteries, the principal is, the worship of one only God. This great truth spreads over half the earth; the number of the initiated swells immensely; the ancient religion, indeed, still subsists, but, not being contrary to the tenet of God's unity, it is connived at. The Romans had their Deus Optimus Maximus; the Greeks, their Zeus, or Supreme God. All the other deities are only intermediate

beings; heroes and emperors were classed among the gods, which meant no more than the blessed; for it is not to be supposed, that Claudius, Octavius, Tiberius, and Caligula, were accounted the creators of heaven and earth.

In a word, it seems demonstrated, that, in Augustus's time, all who had any religion acknowledged one supreme, eternal God, with several classes of secondary deities, the worshipping of whom has since been called idolatry.

The Jewish laws never countenanced idolatry; for, though they admitted malachim, angels, and inferior orders of celestial beings, their law appointed no manner of worship for these secondary deities. Indeed, they adored angels, that is, when they saw any, they prostrated themselves before them; but, as this was a very uncommon case, no ceremonial or legal worship had been instituted for them; neither was any homage paid even to the cherubim of the ark. It is manifest, that the Jews worshipped openly one single God, even as the innumerable crowds of the initiated worshipped him privately in their mysteries.

THIRD QUESTION.

At this time, when the worship of one Supreme God universally prevailed in Asia, in Europe, and in Africa, among all who made a due use of their reason, it was that the Christian religion received its birth.

Platonism greatly promoted the understanding of its dogmas. The Logos, which, in Plato, signifies the wisdom, the reason, of the Supreme Being, with us was made the word, and the second person of the deity. Thus religion was wrapped up in metaphysics, to human reason unfathomable.

How Mary was afterwards declared mother of God; how the consubstantiality of the Father and the word were established, together with the procession of the Pneuma, the divine organ of the divine Logos; two natures and two wills resulting from the Hypostasis; and, lastly, the superior manducation, in which both soul and body are fed with the members of the incarnate God, worshipped and eaten in the form of bread, present to the sight, felt by the taste, and yet annihilated: these things we shall not repeat here. All mysteries have ever been sublime.

So early as the second century, the expulsion of devils was performed, by pronouncing the name of Jesus; whereas before, the name of Jehovah, or Yhaho, was made use of in such miracles; for St. Matthew relates, that Jesus's enemies, hav-

ing spread abroad, that it was by the name of the prince of the devils, that he cast out the devils, he made them this answer; If I cast out devils by Beelzebub, by whom do your children cast them out?

At what time the Jews acknowledged Beelzebub, a foreign deity, to be prince of the devils, is not known; but we know, and learn it from Josephus, that at Jerusalem there were exorcists, whose immediate province it was to dislodge the devils from the bodies of the possessed, that is, men labouring under uncommon distempers, which, in those times, a great part of the world attributed to malignant genii.

Thus the demoniacs were relieved by the true pronunciation of the word Jehovah, now lost, together with other ceremonies, at present buried in oblivion.

Exorcisms by Jehovah, or other of God's names, continued to be practised even in the early ages of the church. Origen against Celsus, No. 262, says, "If, when invoking God, or swearing by him, he is termed the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, certain things will be done by those names, such being their nature and force, that devils are subject to those who utter them; whereas, if called by any other appellation, as god of the tumultuous sea, or the destroyer, no effect follows. The word Israel, translated into Greek, will do nothing; but, on pronouncing it in Hebrew, along with the other requisite words, the magical operation will take place."

The same Origen, No. 19, has these remarkable words: "There are names of a natural virtue,—as those used by the wise men in Egypt, the Magi in Persia, and the Bramins in India. Magic, as it is called, is no vain and chimerical art, as the Stoics and Epicureans pretend; neither were the names of Sabaoth or Adonai made for created beings, but appertain to a mysterious theology concerning the Creator: hence comes the virtue of those names, when placed in order, and pronounced according to the rules," &c.

Origen, in speaking thus, only relates what was universally held, and does not deliver his own private opinion. All the religions then known, admitted a kind of magic, and with two distinctions, the celestial and infernal magic, necromancy and theurgy; every nation had its prodigies, divinations, and oracles. The Persians did not deny the Egyptian miracles, nor the Egyptians offer to discredit the Persian. God was pleased to wink at the first Christians espousing the Sybilline oracles, and some other unconsequential errors, as not corrupting the essentials of religion.

Another very remarkable circumstance is, that the Chris-

tians of the two first centuries abhorred temples, altars, and images. This Origen owns, No. 374; but, on the church being modelled into a settled form, its discipline, and every thing else, became altered.

FOURTH QUESTION.

When once a religion comes to be established by law, the magistrates are very vigilant in suppressing most of the things which used to be done by the professors of that religion before it was publicly received. The founders held their private meetings, though forbidden under penalties: now, none but public assemblies, held under the eye of the law, are permitted, and all clandestine associations made punishable. The old maxim was, It is better to obey God than man: now the opposite maxim comes into vogue, To obey God, is to conform to the laws of the land. All places rung with obsessions and possessions, the devil was let loose upon earth; now the devil does not stir out of his den. Prodigies and predictions were necessary then; now a stop is put to them, and they are exploded: he who should openly take upon himself to foretell any public calamity, would soon be shown the way to Bedlam. The founders took money underhand from the believers; whereas a man, collecting money to dispose of as he pleases, without any legal warrant, would be taken to task. Thus the whole of the scaffolding, used in the construction of the building, is taken away.

FIFTH QUESTION.

Next to our holy religion, to be sure the only good religion, which would be the least bad?

Would it not be the most simple? Would it not be that which taught a great deal of morality and few doctrines? that which tended to make men virtuous without making them fools? that which did not impose the belief of things impossible, contradictory, injurious to the deity, and pernicious to mankind; and which did not take on itself to threaten, with eternal punishments, all who had common sense? Would it not be that which did not support its articles by executioners, and deluge the earth with blood, for unintelligible sophisms? that in which a quibble, a pun, and two or three suppositious maps, would not suffice to make a priest both a sovereign and a god, though noted for the most profligate morals and execrable practices? that which did not make kings subject

to this priest? Would it not be that which taught only the adoration of one God, justice, forbearance and humanity?

SIXTH QUESTION.

The religion of the Gentiles is said to be absurd in several points, contradictory, and pernicious. But have not its evils and follies been greatly exaggerated? Jupiter's carrying on his amours in the shapes of a swan and a bull, with other such doings of the Pagan deities, is certainly the height of ridicule; but let any one, throughout all antiquity, show me a temple dedicated to Leda, lying with a swan or a bull. Did Athens or Rome ever hear a sermon to encourage girls to copulate with the swans in their court-yards? Did the collection of fables, so beautifully embellished by Ovid, constitute their religion? Are they not like our Golden Legend, or Flower of the Saints? Should some Bramin or dervise object to the story of St. Mary the Egyptian, who, not having wherewith to pay the sailors, who had brought her into Egypt, voluntarily granted to each of them, in lieu of money, what is called favours; we should immediately say to the Bramin, You are mistaken, father; the Golden Legend is not our religion.

We taunt the ancients with their prodigies and oracles; but could they return on earth, and were the miracles of our lady of Loretto, and those of our lady of Ephesus, to be numbered, in whose favour would the balance of the account be?

Human sacrifices have been introduced almost among all nations, but very rarely were they practised. Jephthah's daughter and king Agag are the only two we meet with among the Jews, for Isaac and Jonathan were not sacrificed. The Grecian story of Iphigenia is not thoroughly verified: human sacrifices are very rarely heard of among the ancient Romans; in a word, very little blood has the Pagan religion shed, and ours has made the earth an aceldama. Ours, to be sure, is the only good, the only true religion; but, by our abuse of it, we have done so much mischief, that, when we speak of other religions, it should be with temper and modesty.

SEVENTH QUESTION.

If a man would recommend his religion to strangers, or his countrymen, should he not go about it with the most winning composure, the most insinuating mildness? If he

sets out with saying, that what he declares is demonstrably true, he will meet with strong opposition; and, if he takes upon him to tell them that they reject his doctrine, only because it condemns their passions; that their hearts have corrupted their minds; that they have only a false and presumptuous reason; he excites their contempt and resentment, and overthrows what he intended to build up.

If the religion which he preaches be true, will passion and insolence add to its truth? Do you storm and rage, when you say that men should be mild, patient, benevolent, just, exact in the discharge of all the duties of society? No; here every body is of your mind; why, then, such virulent language to your brother, when you are preaching to him metaphysical mysteries? It is because his good sense irritates your self-love. You proudly require that your brother should submit his understanding to yours; and pride, disappointed, blazes into rage; from hence, and hence only, arises your passion. A man who receives ever so many musket-shots in a battle, is never seen to express any anger; but a doctor, at the denial of assent, kindles into implacable fury.

RESURRECTION.

The Egyptians are said to have built their superb pyramids only for tombs, where their bodies, being embalmed outwardly and inwardly, lay till, at the expiration of a thousand years, their souls returned into them. But, if their bodies were to come to life again, as it was their first operation, why did the embalmers pierce the skull with a hook, and draw out the brain? To think of a man's coming to life again without brains, inclines one to apprehend that the Egyptians had little or none when living; but it must be considered, that most of the ancients believed the soul to reside in the breast. And why in the breast sooner than any other part? because it is well known, that under all our sensations, if any thing violent, we feel a dilatation or contraction about the region of the heart; and this produced the opinion, that there was the soul's residence. This soul was something aerial, a light figure roving about where it could, till it had joined its body again.

The belief of the resurrection is much more ancient than the historical times. Athaladas, Mercury's son, could die and come to life again at pleasure; Esculapius restored Hippolitus to life; Hercules conferred the like kindness on Al-

cestes; and Pelops, who had been cut into pieces by his father, the gods made whole again. Plato relates that Heres returned to life only for a fortnight.

It was not till a very long time after Plato, that the Pharisees among the Jews, adopted the tenet of the resurrection.

The Acts of the Apostles mention a very singular transaction, and well worthy of notice. St. James, and several of his companions advised St. Paul, though so thorough a Christian, to go into the temple of Jerusalem, and observe all the ceremonies of the ancient law, to the end all may know, say they, that every thing which is said of you is false, and that you still continue to observe Moses's law.

St. Paul accordingly went into the temple for seven days; but being known on the seventh, he was accused of having brought strangers into it, with a view of profaning it.

Now Paul, perceiving that some of the crowd were Sadducees and others Pharisees, cried out in the council, "Brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee; it is for the hope of another life, and the resurrection of the dead, that I am in danger of being condemned." Acts, xxiii. 6. In all this affair, not a word had been said about the resurrection of the dead; but Paul's drift, in mentioning it, was to create a quarrel between the Pharisees and Sadducees.

"And Paul having said, there arose a dissention between the Pharisees and Sadducees, and the multitude was divided," ver. 7.

"For the Sadducees say, there is no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit; but the Pharisees confess both," &c. ver. 8.

It has been affirmed, that Job, who doubtless is of great antiquity, was acquainted with the doctrine of the resurrection; and, in proof of it, the following words are quoted: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that one day his redemption will rise on me, or that I shall rise again from the dust; that my skin will return; and that I shall again see God in my flesh."

But several commentators understand no more by these words, than that Job hopes he shall soon get over his distemper, and shall not always be lying in the ground, as he then was. The sequel sufficiently proves the truth of this explanation; for the moment he cries out to his false and harsh friends, "Why then, say you, Let us persecute him; or because you shall say, Because we have persecuted him." Does not this evidently mean, you will repent of having insulted me, when

you shall see me again in my former state of health and opulence? A sick person says, I shall recover; not, I shall rise from the dead. To give forced meanings to clear passages, is the sure way not to understand one another.

According to St. Jerome, the sect of the Pharisees began but a very little time before Jesus Christ. Rabbi Hillel is accounted its founder, and he was contemporary with Gamaliel, St. Paul's master.

Many of these Pharisees believed, that it was only the Jews who were to rise again; and that, as to the rest of mankind, they were not worth while. Others affirmed that the resurrection would be only in Palestine, and that bodies buried in other parts, would be secretly conveyed to the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, there to be united to their souls. St. Paul tells the inhabitants of Thessalonica, "That the second coming of Jesus Christ is for them and for him, and that they shall be witnesses of it."

"For, on the signal being given by the archangel and the trumpet of God, the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, and they who shall have died in Jesus Christ shall rise first:" verse 16. "Then we who are alive, and who shall have remained till then, shall be caught up with them into the clouds, to go and meet the Lord in the air; and thus we shall live for ever with the Lord:" verse 17, 1 Thessalonians, chap. iv.

Does not this important passage evidently prove, that the first Christians made themselves sure that they should see the end of the world? and St. Luke actually foretells it, as what should happen in his life-time.

St. Austin thinks that children, and even still-born infants, shall rise at the age of maturity. Origen, Jerome, Athanasius, and Basil, did not believe that women were to rise again with the distinctions of sex. In a word, there have ever been disputes about what we were, what we are, and what we shall be.

SENSATION.

Oysters, we are told, have two senses, moles four, and other animals, like men, have five. Some are for admitting a sixth; but it is evident that the voluptuous sensation, which is what they mean, comes within the touch; and that five senses make up our whole portion. We cannot conceive or desire any thing beyond.

The inhabitants of other globes may have senses which we know nothing of: the number of the senses may gradually increase from globe to globe; and the being endued with innumerable senses, and all perfect, may be the apex or period of all beings.

Though possessing our five organs, what power have we over them? It is always involuntarily that we feel, and never from our own inclination; in the presence of the object, it is impossible not to have the sensation appointed by our nature. The sensation, though in us, does not at all depend on us; we receive it, and in what manner? Is there any affinity between the vibrations of the air, the words of a song, and the impression which these words make on my brain?

Thought seems to us somewhat strange; but sensation is no less wonderful: a divine power equally shows itself in the sensation of the meanest insect, as in a Newton's brain. Yet at seeing thousands of little animals destroyed, you are not in the least concerned what becomes of their sensitive faculty, though this faculty be the work of the Being of beings. You look on them as machines in nature, born to perish and make room for others.

Wherefore, and how, should their sensations subsist, when they no longer exist? What need is there for the author of every thing that has being, to preserve properties of which the subject is extinct? It may as well be said, that the power of the sensitive plant to draw in its leaves towards its twigs, subsists when the plant is withered. Here, undoubtedly, it will be asked how it is, that the sensation of animals perishing with them, man's faculty survives him? That is a question beyond the verge of my knowledge; all I can say to it is, the eternal Author, both of sensation and thought, alone knows how he imparts it, and how he preserves it.

It was the current opinion of all antiquity, that nothing is in our understanding which was not before in our senses. Descartes, in his *Philosophical Romances*, advanced, that we had metaphysical ideas before we so much as knew our nurse's breasts. A college of divines condemned this dogma, not because it was error, but a novelty: afterwards it adopted this very error, because it had been overthrown by Locke. After such shifts of opinion, it has again proscribed that ancient truth, that the senses are the inlets to the understanding. It seems to have acted like governments loaded with debts, sometimes giving a currency to certain notes, and afterwards suppressing them. But the notes of this college have, for some time, quite lost their credit.

In spite of all the colleges in the world, philosophers will still see, that our first knowledge we receive from our sensations; and that our memory is no more than a continued sensation: a man, born without any of his five senses, would, could he live, be totally void of any ideas. It is owing to the senses that we even have our metaphysical notions; for how should a circle or a triangle be measured, without having seen or felt one? How can we form an idea, imperfect as it is, of infinitude, but by enlarging boundaries? and how can we throw down boundaries without having seen or felt them? An eminent philosopher says, that sensation includes all our faculties. *Traite des Sensations.*

What must be inferred from all this? That I leave to reflective readers.

SOLOMON.

SURELY Solomon could not be so rich as he is said to be?

The book of Chronicles tells us that melk David, his father, left him one hundred thousand talents of gold, and one thousand talents of silver: so enormous a sum, that it is quite incredible. There is not so much cash in all the nations of the whole world; and it is not easy to conceive that David amassed such treasures in so small a country as Palestine.

Solomon, according to the first book of Chronicles, had forty thousand stables for his chariot-horses. Each stable containing ten horses, makes four hundred thousand, which, with his twelve thousand saddle horses, amount to four hundred and twelve thousand good war horses; a great many for a Jewish melk, who never was engaged in a war. Never was the like magnificence seen in a country breeding only asses, and, at present, without any other beast for the saddle. But probably times are altered; indeed so wise a prince, having a thousand concubines, might very well have four hundred and twelve thousand horses, were it only to give his seraglio an airing along Genesareth lake, or that of Sodom, or toward Cedron brook, one of the most delicious spots on earth, except that this brook is dry nine months of the year, and the ground a little stoney.

But is this same wise Solomon really author of the works fathered on him? Is it likely, for instance, that the Jewish eclogue, called the Song of Songs, is of his writing?

A monarch, who had a thousand mistresses, may have said

to one of these charmers, Kiss me with the kisses of thy mouth, for thy breasts are better than wine. A king and a shepherd, amidst such armorous endearments, may very naturally talk alike: but it is somewhat odd, that it is the girl who is made to talk thus wantonly about kisses and her sweetheart's breasts.

I likewise will not deny but a courtly prince may make his mistress say, My husband is like a cluster of myrrh; he shall lie all night between my breasts. A cluster of myrrh is to me somewhat obscure; but I very well understand the charmer's meaning, when she bids her beloved lay his left hand over her neck, and embrace her with his right.

There are some expressions in which the author's elucidation is wanted; as when he says, "Your navel is like a goblet, in which there is always something to drink; your belly is like a bushel of wheat; your breasts are like two young roses; your nose is as the tower of Lebanon."

This, I own, is not the style of Virgil's Eclogues; but all have not a like style, and a Jew is not obliged to write like Virgil.

I suppose it may be another beautiful strain of eastern eloquence to say, "Our sister is yet little; she has no breasts; what shall we do for our sister? If she be a wall, let us build on her; if a door, let us shut her."

We will allow that such words might have escaped Solomon, (though the wisest of men,) in a merry mood. This composition is said to be an epithalamium, on his marriage with Pharaoh's daughter: but is it natural that Pharaoh's son-in-law should leave his beloved in the night, to go and saunter in his walnut-yard; and that the queen should run after him barefooted? that the city watch should beat her and take her gown from her?

Could a king's daughter have said, I am brown, yet am I beautiful as Solomon's furs. Such expressions might be overlooked in a home-spun swain; though, after all, there can be little affinity between furs and a girl's beauty. Well, but Solomon's furs might be exceedingly admired in their time; and for a low-lived Jew, in a lay to his sweetheart, to tell her, in his Jewish gibberish, that never any Jewish king had such fine furred gowns as her dear self, was not at all out of character; but Solomon must have been strangely infatuated with his furs, to compare them to his mistress. Were a king, in our times, to write such an epithalamium, on his marriage with a neighbouring monarch's daughter, he would forfeit all title to the laurel.

Several rabbis have advanced, that this luscious eclogue not only is not Solomon's, but is not so much as authentic. Theodore de Mopsueste was of the same opinion; and the celebrated Grotius calls the Song of Songs a libidinous work, *flagitiosus*; yet it is received as canonical, and reputed to be throughout an allegory of Christ and his church's espousals. The allegory must be owned to be a little forced; and what the church could mean, by its little sister having no breasts, and that, if a wall, she must be built upon, is impenetrably obscure.

Ecclesiastes is of a more serious turn, but no more Solomon's, than the Song of Songs. The author is commonly thought to be Jesus, the son of Sirach, whilst others attribute it to Philo of Biblos; but whoever he was, the Pentateuch seems not to have been known in his time, else he would not have said, that, at the time of the deluge, Abraham was going to sacrifice Isaac, or have spoken of Joseph, the patriarch, as a king of Egypt.

The Proverbs have been ascribed to Isaiah, Elziah, Sobna, Eliakim, Joake, and many others; but to whomsoever we owe this collection of eastern sentences, we may be sure it does not come from a royal hand. Would a king have said, the wrath of a king is as the roaring of a lion? This is the language of a subject, or slave, who trembles at a frown from his master. Would Solomon have harped so much on a libidinous woman? Would he have said, Look not on wine, when it appears bright in the glass, and its colour shines?

I very much question whether drinking-glasses were made in Solomon's time; the invention is but modern: the ancients drank out of wooden or metal cups; and this single passage betrays that book to be the work of some Alexandrine Jew, and written long since Alexander.

We now come to Ecclesiastes, which Grotius affirms to have been written in the time of Zorobabel. This author's freedom is known to every body; he says, "That men are in nothing better than beasts; that it is better never to have been born than to exist; that there is no other life; that the only good is to eat and drink, and be merry with the woman one loves.

Solomon, perhaps, might have talked in this manner to some of his women, and some construe these sayings as objections which he makes to himself; but besides the libertinism of which they strongly savour, they have nothing of the appearance of objections; and to make the author mean the contrary of what he says, is an insult on the world.

However, several of the fathers tell us, that Solomon repented, and imposed on himself a severe penance: now, this should silence all animadversions on his conduct.

But though these books were written by a Jew, what is that to us? The Christian religion is, indeed, founded on Judaism, but not on all the Jewish books. Why should the Song of Songs be held more sacred among us than the fables of the Talmud? The answer is, because we have included it in the Hebrew canon. And what is this same canon? It is a collection of authentic works. Well, and must a work of course be divine, by being authentic? For instance, a history of the kings of Judah and of Sichem, what is it but a history? A strange prepossession indeed! We despise and abhor the Jews; and yet we insist that all their writings, which we have collected, bear the sacred stamp of divinity. Never was such a contradiction heard of!

SOUL.

It would be a fine thing to see one's soul. Know thyself, is an excellent precept, which God alone can practise. Who but himself can know his essence?

We call that which animates, soul; and so contracted is the understanding, that we know little more of it. Three fourths of our species do not go that length, and concern themselves little about the thinking being; the other fourth is seeking, but has not found, nor ever will find, it.

Poor pedant! thou seest a vegetating plant, and thou sayest, Vegetation, or vegetative soul. Thou observest that bodies have and give motion, and this with thee is strength. Thy hound's aptness in learning to hunt under thy instruction, thou callest Instinct, or sensitive soul; and, as thou hast combined ideas, this thou termest, Spirit.

But, pray, what do you mean by, This flower vegetates? Is there a real being named Vegetation? One body impels another, but is there in it a distinct being, called Strength? This hound brings thee a partridge; but is there a being called Instinct? Wouldst thou not laugh at a philosopher, had he even been Alexander's preceptor, who should say, All animals live; therefore there is in them a being, a substantial form, which is life?

Could a tulip speak, and say to thee, We are evidently two beings united; wouldst thou not contemptuously turn thy back on the tulip?

Let us first examine what thou knowest, and of what thou art certain: that thou walkest with thy feet; that thou digestest by thy stomach; that thou feelest all over thy body; and that thou thinkest by thy head. Let us see if thy reason alone could give thee so much insight as to conclude, without any supernatural help, that thou hast a soul.

The first philosophers, both Chaldeans and Egyptians, said, There must be something in us that produces our thoughts. This something must be very subtile: it is a breath; it is fire; it is ether; it is a quintessence; it is a light form; it is an entelechia; it is a number; it is a harmony. According to the divine Plato, it is a compound of the same and of the other; and Epicurus, from Democritus, has said that it is thinking atoms in us: but, friend, how does an atom think? Own your ignorance here.

The opinion which, unquestionably, we should embrace is that the soul is an immaterial being; but as certainly you do not conceive what this immaterial being is. No, answer the learned; but we know that its nature is to think. And how came you to know this? We know it, because it does think. O doctors! O schoolmen! I am very much afraid that you are as ignorant as Epicurus. The nature of a stone is to fall, because it falls; but I ask you what makes it fall?

We know, continue they, that a stone has no soul. Granted, I believe it as well as you. We know that a negative and an affirmative are not divisible; are not parts of matter; I am of your opinion. But matter, otherwise unknown to us, has qualities that are not divisible, as gravitation towards a centre, given it by God. Now this gravitation has no parts, is not divisible. The motory force of bodies is not a being composed of parts; neither can it be said, that the vegetation of all organized bodies, their life, their instinct, are distinct or divisible beings. You can no more cut asunder the vegetation of a rose, the life of a horse, or the instinct of a dog, than you can sever a sensation, a negation, or an affirmation. Thus your fine argument, taken from the indivisibility of thought, proves nothing at all.

What then do you call your soul? What idea have you of it? All you can, of yourself, without a revelation, allow to be in yourself, is a power, unknown to you, of feeling and thinking.

Now, honestly tell me, is this power of feeling and thinking the same as that by which you digest and walk? You tell me it is not; for it would be in vain for your understanding to say

to your stomach, Digest: it would do no such thing were it out of order; and to as little effect would your immaterial being command your feet to walk; they would not move if the gout were in them.

The Greeks were well aware that thought often had no concern with the play of our organs; instead of those organs they substituted a sensitive soul: and, for the thoughts, a more fine and more subtile soul, a *nous*.

But let me come to this soul of thought, which, on a thousand occasions, has the superintendence of the sensitive soul. The thinking soul orders its hands to take, and they take; but it never tells its heart to beat, its blood to flow, or its chyle to form itself; all this is done without it. Thus are two souls full of business, and very little mistresses in their own home.

Now certainly that first sensitive soul does not exist; it is nothing but the motion of your organs. Observe this, O man! that thy weak reason affords thee no more proof that the other soul exists. It is only by faith that thou canst know it. Thou art born; thou livest; thou actest; thou thinkest; thou sleepest and wakest, without knowing how. God has given thee the faculty of thinking, as he has given thee all thy other appurtenances; and had he not come, at the time appointed by his providence, to inform thee that thou hast an immaterial and immortal soul, thou wouldst have been without any proof of it.

Let us now take a view of the fine systems which philosophy has struck out concerning the soul.

One says that the soul of man is part of the substance of God himself; another, that it is part of the great all; a third, that it has been created from all eternity; a fourth, that it is made, and not created: others affirm that God makes them as they are wanted; and that they come at the instant of copulation: one says they are lodged in the seminal animalcules: not at all, says another; they take up their residence in the falopian tubes. One coming in at the heat of the dispute, cries, You are all wrong; the soul stays six weeks, till the fœtus be formed, and then possesses itself of the pineal gland; but, if the germ prove fruitless, it goes away to whence it came, till a better opportunity. The last opinion makes its abode to be in the callous body. This is the situation assigned to it by La Peironie. Indeed none, under the king of France's first surgeon, could provide such an apartment for the soul. However, the surgeon has got into better vogue than his callous body.

St. Thomas, in his seventy-fifth question, &c. says that the soul is a form, *Subsistens per se*; that it is all in all; that its essence differs from its power; that there are three vegetative souls, the nutritive, the augmentative, and the generative; that the memory of spiritual things is spiritual; and the memory of corporeal things is corporeal; that the rational soul is an immaterial form as to the operations, and material in essence. St. Thomas has written two thousand pages, all of this force and perspicuity! No wonder that schools style him the angelic doctor!

As many systems have been invented on the manner of the soul's perceptions, when it shall have quitted this body, by which it perceived: how it will hear without ears, smell without a nose, and feel without hands; what body it will afterwards reassume; whether that which it had at the age of two years, or of fourscore? How the identity of the same person will subsist? How the soul of a man who was seized with ideotism at the age of fifteen, and died in that state at seventy, will recover the train of ideas which it had at its age of puberty? By what dexterity a soul, one of whose legs was cut off in Europe, and which lost an arm in America, will find this leg and arm again, after their several mutations into esculent herbs, and the blood of some other animal? There would be no end of enumerating all the extravagances which this poor human soul has broached concerning itself.

We live upon this earth in the same manner as the man with the iron mask spent his days in prison, without knowing his origin, or the reason of his being confined, which excited a general curiosity.

If any man has discovered a ray of light in this region of darkness, perhaps it is Malebranche, notwithstanding the general prejudices against his system. It does not differ greatly from that of the Stoics; and who knows but these two opinions, properly rectified, come nearest the truth? There is, I think, something very sublime in that ancient notion, "We exist in God; our thoughts and sentiments are derived from the Supreme Being."

A most remarkable circumstance is, that in the laws of God's chosen people, not a word is said of the soul's spirituality and immortality: nothing in the Decalogue, nothing in Leviticus, nor in Deuteronomy.

It is very certain, it is manifest, that Moses no where proposes to the Jews rewards and punishments in another state; that he never mentions to them the immortality of their souls; that he never encourages them with the hopes of heaven, nor

does he threaten them with hell; his promises and menaces are all temporal.

Before his death, he tells them, in Deuteronomy,

"If, after having children and grand-children, you deal falsely, you shall be cut off from the land, and be made little among the nations.

"I am a jealous God, punishing the iniquity of the fathers to the third and fourth generation.

"Honour thy father and mother, that thy life may be long.

"You shall never want food.

"If you follow after strange gods, you shall be destroyed.

"If you obey the Lord, you shall have rain in spring and autumn; corn, oil, wine, and fodder for your beasts, that you may eat and be satisfied.

"Put these words into your hearts, about your hands, between your eyes; write them on your doors, that your days may be multiplied.

"Do as I order you, without adding or taking any thing away.

"If a prophet arise among you, foretelling strange things, and his prophecy be true, and what he says come to pass; should he say to you, Come, let us follow strange gods; ye shall immediately kill him; and all the people smite him after you.

"When the Lord shall have delivered the nations into your hands, put them all to the sword, without sparing one single man; thou shalt not pity any one.

"Eat no unclean birds, as the eagle, the ossifrage, the osprey, &c.

"Eat no creatures which chew the cud, and are not cloven footed; as the camel, the hare, and the cony.

"Whilst you observe all these ordinances, you shall be blessed in your houses, and in your fields; the fruits of your body, of your land, and of your cattle, shall be blessed.

"If you fail to observe all these ordinances and ceremonies, cursed shall you be in your houses and in your fields.

"Famine and poverty shall come on you; you shall die, distressed by cold, want, and sickness; you shall have the itch and the scab; you shall have ulcers in your knees, and in your legs.

"The stranger shall lend to you on usury,——because ye have not served the Lord.

"And ye shall eat the fruit of your bodies, and the flesh of your sons and of your daughters."

Do not all these promises and threatenings relate entirely

to things of time, and this world? Is there a single word in them, concerning the soul's immortality, and a future life?

Several celebrated commentators have thought, that those two capital doctrines were very well known to Moses, and, in proof of it, produce Jacob's words, who, apprehending that his son had been devoured by wild beasts, says, in his grief, I shall go down with my son to the grave, *in infernum*, into hell: that is to say, as my son is dead, let me die.

They further prove it by passages from Isaiah and Ezekiel; but the Hebrews, to whom Moses was speaking, knew nothing of those two prophets, as not living till some ages after.

To dispute about Moses's private sentiments, is wasting words to no purpose. The truth is, that, in his public laws, he had never so much as once made mention of a life to come, limiting all punishments and rewards to the present state. If he was acquainted with a future life, why did he not expressly set forth such an important tenet? but, if he was a stranger to it, what was the scope of his mission?

This is a question advanced by several great men: and, in answer to it, they say, that Moses's Lord, who is the Lord of all men, reserved to himself the prerogative of explaining to the Jews, in his own time, a doctrine, which they were not in a condition to understand when in the wilderness.

Had Moses taught the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, a great school among the Jews would not always have opposed it. Nay, that great school, the Sadducees, would not have been allowed of in the state, much less would they have held the chief employments; and still much less would high-priests have been taken from such a body.

It appears, that the Jews were not divided into three sects, the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes, till after the foundation of Alexandria. Josephus, the historian, who was a Pharisee, says, (*Antiquities*, book xiii.,) that the Pharisees believed the metempsychosis. The Sadducees held, that the soul perished with the body. The opinion of the Essenes was, that souls are immortal, and came down into bodies, from the upper regions of the air, in an ærial form; that their return thither is by a rapid attraction; and, after death, those which belonged to good persons, have mansions assigned them beyond the ocean, in a country where there is neither heat nor cold, wind nor rain; whilst the souls of the wicked go to a quite contrary climate: such was the theology of the Jews.

He who alone was to set mankind right, came and overthrew these three sects; but, without him, we never should have been able to know any thing of the soul, for philosophers

never had any determinate idea of it; and Moses, the only true legislator of the world, before our Divine Teacher; Moses, who spoke to God face to face, and who saw only his hinder parts, has left mankind in their natural ignorance of this momentous article; so that it is but seventeen hundred years since there has been any certainty of the existence and immortality of the soul.

Cicero had only surmises; his grandson and grand-daughter might have learned further from the first Galileans who came to Rome.

But before and since that time, in all the parts of the earth, where the apostles had not preached the Gospel, every one might say to his soul, Who art thou? whence comest thou? what art thou doing? whither art thou going? Thou art, I know not what; thou thinkest and perceivest; and, wert thou to perceive and think a hundred thousand millions of years, never wouldst thou, by thine own faculties, without the assistance of God, know a jot more than thou knowest now.

Know, man, that God has given thee understanding to guide thy behaviour, and not to penetrate into the essence of the things which he has created.

SUPERSTITION.

Whatever goes beyond the adoration of one Supreme Being, and a submission of the heart to his eternal orders, is generally superstition; and a most dangerous superstition is the annexing the pardon of crimes to certain ceremonies.

> "The healthful ox they strike: the victim dies;
> Sent, to the manes of the gods, a sacrifice.
> How credulous! Can tricks make crimes decay?
> Or holy water wash our sins away?"

You imagine, that God will forget your having killed a man, only for your washing yourself in a river, sacrificing a black sheep, and some words being said over you. Of course, then a second murder will be forgiven you at the same easy rate, and so a third; and a hundred murders will only cost you a hundred black sheep, and as many ablutions! Poor mortals! away with such conceits: the best way is, commit no murder, and so save your black sheep.

How scandalous is it to imagine, that a priest of Isis and Cybele can reconcile you to the deity, by playing on cymbals

'and castanets! And what is this priest of Cybele, this vagrant gelding, who lives by your weakness, that he shall set up to be a mediator between heaven and yourself? Has he any commission from God? He takes your money only for muttering some strange words; and can you think that the Being of beings ratifies what this hypocrite says?

Some superstitions are innocent; you dance on Diana or Pomona's festivals, or those of any of the secondary gods in your calendar: be it so; dancing is pleasant, healthy, and exhilirating; it injures nobody; but do not take it into your head, that Pomona and Vertumnus are mightily pleased at your having frolicked in honour of them; and that, should you fail to do so, they would make you smart for it. The gardener's spade and hoe are the only Pomona and Vertumnus. Do not be so weak as to think, that your garden will be destroyed by a tempest, if you omit dancing the pyrrhic or the cordax.

There is another superstition, which, perhaps, is excusable, and even an incentive to virtue: I mean deifying great men, who have been signal benefactors to their own species. To be sure, it would be better only to look on them as venerable personages, and especially to endeavour to imitate them; therefore, revere, without worshipping, a Solon, a Thales, and a Pythagoras; but do not, by any means, pay thy adoration to Hercules, for having cleansed the Augean stables, and lying with fifty girls in one night. Especially forbear setting up a worship for wretches, without any other merit than ignorance, enthusiasm, and nastiness; who made a vow of idleness and beggary, and gloried in such infamy; fit subjects, indeed, for deification after their death, who were never known to do the least good when living!

Observe, that the most superstitious times have ever been noted for the greatest enormities.

TOLERATION.

What is toleration? It is a privilege, to which human nature is entitled: we are all made up of weakness and errors; it therefore behoves us mutually to forgive each other's follies. This is the very first law of nature.

Though the Gueber, the Banian, the Jew, the Mahometan, the lettered Chinese, the Greek, the Roman Catholic, and the Quaker, traffic together on the Exchange of Amsterdam, London, Surat, or Bassora, they will never offer to lift up a poinard against each other, to gain proselytes: wherefore, then, since

the first council of Nice, have we been almost continually cutting each other's throats?

Constantine began with issuing an edict, allowing the exercise of all religions; and, some time after, turned persecutor. Before him, all the severe treatment of the Christians, proceeded purely from their beginning to make a party in the state. The Romans permitted every kind of worship, even of the Jews and Egyptians, both of which they so very much despised. How, then, came Rome to tolerate these forms? It was, because neither the Egyptians, nor the Jews themselves, went about to exterminate the ancient religion of the empire: they did not cross seas and lands, to make proselytes; the getting of money was all they minded: whereas, it is indisputable, that the Christians could not be easy, unless their religion bore the sway. The Jews were disgusted at the statue of Jupiter being set up in Jerusalem; but the Christians would not so much as allow it to be in the capitol of Rome. St. Thomas candidly owns, that it was only for want of power, that the Christians did not dethrone the emperors. They held, that all the world ought to embrace their religion; this, of course, made them enemies to all the world, till its happy conversion.

Their controversial points, likewise, set them at enmity one against another, concerning the divinity of Christ; they who denied it, were anathematised as Ebionites; and these anathematised the worshippers of Jesus.

If some would have all goods to be in common, as they alleged was the custom in the apostles' time, their adversaries call them Nicolaitans, and accuse them of the most horrid crimes. If others set up for a mystical devotion, they are branded with the appellation of Gnostics, and opposed with extreme vehemence and severity. Marcion, for disputing on the Trinity, got the name of an idolater.

Tertullian, Praxeas, Origen, Novatus, Novatianus, Sabellus, and Donatus, were all persecuted by their brethren, before Constantine's time; and, no sooner had Constantine established the Christian religion, than the Athanasians and Eusebians fell foul of one another; and ever since, down to our own times, the Christian church has been deluged with blood.

The Jewish people were, I own, extremely barbarous and merciless; massacreing all the inhabitants of a little wretched country, to which they had no more right than their vile descendants have to Paris or London. However, when Naaman is cured of his leprosy, by dipping seven times in the river Jordan, and by way of expressing his gratitude to Elijah, from

whom he had the secret of that easy cure, he tells him, that he will worship the God of the Jews; he yet reserves to himself the liberty to worship his sovereign's God likewise; and asks Elisha's leave, which the prophet readily grants. The Jews worshipped their God, but never were offended at, or so much as thought it strange, that every nation had its own deity. They acquiesced in Chamoth's giving a tract of land to the Moabites, provided they would let them quietly enjoy what they held from their god. Jacob made no difficulty of marrying an idolater's daughter; for Laban had another kind of god than he whom Jacob worshipped. These are instances of toleration among the most haughty, most obstinate, and most cruel people of all antiquity; and we, overlooking what little indulgence was among them, have imitated only their sanguinary rancour.

Every individual, persecuting another for not being of his opinion, is a monster. This is evident beyond all dispute: but the government, men in power, princes; how are they to deal with those of a different worship from theirs? If foreigners and powerful, it is certain a prince will not disdain entering into an alliance with them. Francis I. though his most Christian majesty, unites with the Mussulmans against Charles V., likewise a most Christian monarch. Francis supplies the German Lutherans with money, to support their revolt against the emperor; but, according to custom, burns them in his own country: thus, from policy, he pays them in Saxony, and, from policy, makes bonfires of them at Paris. But what was the consequence? Persecution ever makes proselytes: France came to swarm with new Protestants, who, at first, quietly submitted to be hanged, and afterwards hung others; civil wars came on, and St. Bartholomew's day, or the massacre of Paris, crowned all. Thus this corner of the world became worse, than all that ever the ancients or moderns have said of hell.

Ye fools, never to pay a proper worship to the God who made you; wretches, on whom the example of the Noachidæ, the lettered Chinese, the Persees, and all wise men, have had no influence! Monsters, to whom superstitions are necessary, as carrion to crows! You have been already told it, and I have nothing else to say: whilst you have but two religions among you, they will be ever at daggers-drawing; if you have thirty, they will live quietly. Turn your eyes to the grand signior; he has among his subjects, Guequers, Banians, Greeks, Latins, Christians, and Nestorians. Whoever goes

about to raise disturbance, is surely impaled; and thus all live in peace and quietness.

TYRANNY.

By a tyrant, is meant a sovereign, who makes his humour the law; who seizes on his subjects' substance, and afterwards enlists them, to go and give his neighbours the like treatment. These tyrants are not known in Europe.

Tyranny is distinguished into that of one person, and of many; a body, invading the rights of other bodies, and corrupting the laws, that it may exercise a despotism, apparently legal, is the latter tyranny: but Europe, likewise, has none of these tyrants.

Under which tyranny would you choose to live? Under neither: but, had I the option, the tyranny of one person, appears to me less odious and dreadful, than that of many. A despot has always some intervals of good humour, which is never known to an assembly of despots. If a tyrant has done me an injury, there is his mistress, his confessor, or his page, by means of whom I may appease him, and obtain redress; but a set of supercilious tyrants is inaccessible to all applications. If they are not unjust, still they are austere and harsh; and no favours are ever known to come from them.

Under one despot, I need only stand up against a wall, when I see him coming by; or prostrate myself, or knock my forehead against the ground, according to the custom of the country; but, under a body of perhaps a hundred despots, I may be obliged to repeat this ceremony a hundred times a day, which is not a little troublesome to those who are not very nimble. Another disagreeable circumstance is, if my farm happens to be in the neighbourhood of one of our great lords, it is unknown what damages I am obliged to put up with; and, if I have a law-suit with a relation to a relation of one of their high mightinesses, it will infallibly go against me. I am very much afraid, that, in this world, things will come to such a pass, as to have no other option, than being either hammer or anvil. Happy he, who gets clear of this alternative.

VIRTUE.

WHAT is virtue? doing good to others. How can I give the name of virtue to any one, but to him who does me good? I am in want, you relieve me; I am in danger, you come to my assistance; I have been deceived, you tell me the truth. I am ill used, you comfort me; I am ignorant, you instruct me; I must say then, you are virtuous. But what will become of the cardinal and theological virtues? Let some even remain in the schools.

What is your temperance to me? Is it no more than the observance of a rule of health, you will be the better for it; and much good may it do you. If you have faith and hope, better still; they will procure you eternal life. Your theological virtues are heavenly gifts; and, those you call cardinal, are excellent qualities for your guidance in life; but, relatively to your neighbour, they are not virtues. The prudent man does good to himself; the virtuous, to men in general. Very well was it said, by St. Paul, that charity is better than faith and hope.

But are no virtues to be admitted, but those by which others are benefitted? No. We live in a society; consequently, there is nothing truly good to us, but what is for the good of such society. If a hermit is sober and devout, and, among other mortifications, wears a sackcloth shirt, such a one I set down as a saint; but, before I style him virtuous, let him do some act of virtue which will promote the well-being of his fellow-creatures. Whilst he lives by himself, to us he is neither good nor bad; he is nothing. If St. Bruno reconciled families, and relieved the indigent, he was virtuous; if he prayed and fasted in the desert, he was a saint. Among men, virtue is a mutual exchange of kindness, and whoever declines such exchanges, ought not to be reckoned a member of society. Were that saint to live in the world, probably he would do good in it; but, whilst he keeps out of it, the world will only do his saintship justice, in not allowing him to be virtuous. He may be good to himself, but not to us.

But, say you, if a hermit be given to drunkenness, sensuality, and private debauchery, he is a vicious man; consequently, with the opposite qualities, he is virtuous. This I cannot assent to: if he has those faults, he is a very filthy man; but, with regard to society, as it is not hurt by his infamies, he is *not* vicious, wicked, or deserving of punishment. It is to be presumed, that, were he to return into society, he would do

much harm, and prove a very bad man. Of this there is a greater probability, than that the temperate and chaste hermit will be a good man, for, in public life, faults increase, and good qualities diminish. A stronger objection is, that Nero, Pope Alexander VI. and such monsters, did some good. I answer, that, when they did, they were virtuous.

Some divines, so far from allowing that excellent emperor, Antoninus, to have been a good man, represent him as a conceited Stoic, who, besides ruling over men, coveted their esteem; that in all the good he did to mankind, his own reputation was the end; that his justice, application, and benevolence, proceeded purely from vanity; and that his virtues were a downright imposition on the world. At this, I cannot forbear crying out, O, my God! be pleased, in thy goodness, often to give us such hypocrites.

WAR.

FAMINE, the plague, and war, are the three most famous ingredients in this lower world. Under famine, may be classed all the noxious foods which want obliges us to have recourse to; thus shortening our lives, whilst we hope to support them.

In the plague are included all contagious distempers; and these are not less than two or three thousand. These two gifts we hold from Providence; but war, in which all those gifts are concentered, we owe to the fancy of three or four hundred persons, scattered over the surface of the globe, under the names of princes and ministers; and, on this account, it may be, that, in several dedications, they are called the living images of the Deity.

The most hardened flatterer will allow, that war is ever attended with plague and famine, especially if he has seen the military hospitals in Germany, or passed through villages, where some notable feat of arms has been performed.

It is unquestionably a very noble art to ravage countries, destroy dwellings, and, *communibus annis*, out of a hundred thousand men, to cut off forty thousand. This invention was originally cultivated by nations, assembled for their common good: for instance, the diet of the Greeks sent word to the diet of Phrygia and its neighbour, that they were putting to sea, in a thousand fishing-boats, in order to do their best to cut them off root and branch.

The Roman people, in a general assembly, resolved, that it was their interest to go and fight the Vejentes, or the Volscians, before harvest; and, some years after, all the Romans being angry with all the Carthaginians, fought a long time both by sea and land. It is otherwise in our time.

A genealogist sets forth to a prince, that he is descended, in a direct line, from a count, whose kindred, three or four hundred years ago, had made a family compact with a house, the very memory of which is extinguished. That house had some distant claim to a province, the last proprietor of which died of an apoplexy. The prince and his council instantly resolve, that this province belongs to him by divine right. The province, which is some hundred leagues from him, protests that it does not so much as know him; that it is not disposed to be governed by him; that before he prescribes laws to them, their consent, at least, is necessary: these allegations do not so much as reach the prince's ears; it is insisted, that his right is incontestable: he instantly collects a multitude of men, who have nothing to do or to lose; clothes them in coarse blue; puts on them hats bound with white worsted; wheels them to the right and left; and thus marches away with them to glory.

Other princes, on this, take part in it to the best of their ability, and soon cover a small extent of country, with more hireling murderers, than Gengis Khan, Tamerlane, and Bajazet, at their heels.

People, at no small distance, hearing that fighting is going forward, and that, if they make one, there are five or six sous a day, immediately divide into two bands, like reapers, and go and sell their services to the first bidder. They then furiously butcher each other, not only without having any concern in the quarrel, but without so much as knowing the cause.

Sometimes five or six powers are engaged, three against three, or two against four; sometimes even one against five, all equally detesting each other, and friends and foes by turns; agreeing only in one thing—to do all the mischief possible!

An odd circumstance, in this infernal enterprize, is, that every chief of these ruffians has his colours consecrated, and solemnly prays to God, before he goes to destroy his neighbour. If the slain in a battle do not exceed two or three thousand men, the fortunate commander does not think it worth thanking God for; but if, besides killing ten or twelve thousand, he has been so far favoured by heaven, as to destroy

some remarkable place, then a verbose hymn is sung, in four parts, composed in a language unknown to the combatants, and stuffed with barbarisms. The same song does for marriages and births, as for massacres, which is scarcely pardonable, in a nation, of all others, the most noted for new songs.

All countries pay a number of orators to celebrate these sanguinary actions; some in a long black coat, and over it a short cloak; others in a gown, with a kind of shirt over it; some over their shirts have two pieces of a motley-coloured stuff hanging. They are all very long-winded in their harangues, and, to illustrate a battle, fought in Weteravia, bring up what passed thousands of years ago in Palestine.

At other times, these gentry declaim against vice: they prove, by syllogisms and antitheses, that ladies, for slightly heightening the hue of their cheeks with a little carmine, will assuredly be the objects of eternal vengeance; that the tragedies of *Polyeucte* and *Athalia* are the devil's works; that he, whose table, on a day of abstinence, is loaded with fish, of the value of two hundred crowns, is infallibly saved; and that a poor man, for eating two-pennyworth of mutton, goes to the devil for ever.

Among five or six thousand such declamations, there may possibly be three or four, written by a Gaul, named Massillon, which a gentleman may bear to read; but, not in one of all these discourses, has the orator the spirit to animadvert on war, that scourge and crime which includes all others. These grovelling speakers are continually prating against love, mankind's only solace, and the only way of repairing it: not a word do they say of the detestable endeavours of the mighty for its destruction.

Bourdaloue, you have made a very bad sermon against impurity, but not one, either good or bad, on those various murders, robberies, violences, that universal rage, by which the world is laid waste! Put together all the vices of all ages and places, and never will they come up to the mischiefs and enormities of only one campaign!

Ye bungling soul-physicians, to rail, for an hour and more, against a few flea-bites, and not say a word about that horrid distemper, which tears us to pieces! Burn your books, ye moralizing philosophers!—Whilst the humour of a few shall make it an act of loyalty, to butcher thousands of our fellow-creatures, the part of mankind, dedicated to heroism, will be the most execrable and destructive monsters in all nature. Of what avail is humanity, benevolence, modesty, temperance,

mildness, discretion, and piety, when half a pound of lead, discharged at the distance of six hundred paces, shatters my body; when I expire, at the age of twenty, under pains unspeakable, and amidst thousands in the same miserable condition; when my eyes, at their last opening, see my native town in a blaze, and the last sounds I hear are the shrieks and groans of women and children, expiring among the ruins, and all for the pretended interest of a man, who is a stranger to us!

The worst is, war appears to be an unavoidable scourge, for, if we observe, the god Mars was worshipped in all nations; and, among the Jews, Sabaoth signifies the god of armies; but in Homer, Minerva calls Mars a furious, hair-brained, infernal deity.

WHATEVER IS, IS RIGHT.

What a clamour was raised in the schools, and even among sober thinkers, when Leibnitz, paraphrasing on Plato, built his structure of the best of possible worlds, affirming that all things went on in the best manner, and that God could make but one world. Now, Plato had allowed that *God could make* five, there being five regular solid bodies: the tetraedron, or three-faced pyramid, with the base equal; the cube; the exaedron; the dodecaedron; and the licoaedron. But our world is not of the form of any of Plato's bodies; so that he should have allowed God a sixth manner.

So much for the divine Plato. Leibnitz, who certainly was his superior, both in metaphysics and geometry, in the tenderness of philanthrophy, showed mankind, that they ought to be very well satisfied, and that God had done all he could for us; that he had necessarily, among all possibilities, made choice of what was indisputably the best.

What becomes of original sin? was the cry of many. Let what will become of it, said Leibnitz, and his friends; but, in his public writings, he makes original sin necessarily a part of the best world.

How! our first parents to be driven out of a delightful abode, where they were to have lived for ever, had they not eaten an apple? How! in wretchedness to beget children, loaded with a variety of wretchedness, and making others equally so! How! to undergo such diseases; to feel such vexations; to expire in pain, and, by way of refreshment, to be burned through all the ages of eternity: was this the best

portion? This is not over good for us; and in what can it be good for God? Leibnitz was sensible this admitted of no answer; accordingly he begins making large books, unintelligible even to himself.

To deny that there is evil, may be said as a banter by a Lucullus full of health, and feasting in his saloon, with his mistress and his jocund cronies; but only let him look out at the window, and he will see some unhappy; and a fever will make him so too.

I am not fond of quoting: it is usually a critical task; it is neglecting both what precedes and follows the passage quoted, and bringing on one's self complaints and quarrels; yet I must quote Lactantius, a father of the church, who, in chap. xiii. on the Divine Anger, puts the following words into Epicurus's mouth: "Either God would remove evil from this world, but cannot, or he can, but will not; or he has neither the power nor the will; or, lastly, he has both the power and the will. If he has the will and not the power, it shows weakness, which is contrary to the nature of God; if he has the power, and not the will, it is malignity; and this is no less contrary to his nature. If he is neither able nor willing, it is both weakness and malignity; and this is no less contrary to his nature. If he is both willing and able (which, alone, is consonant to the nature of God,) how came it, that there is evil in the world?"

This is a home argument, and Lactantius gives but a sorry answer to it, in saying, that God wills evil, but has given us wisdom for acquiring good. This answer must be allowed to fall very short of the objection; as supposing that God, without producing evil, could not have given us wisdom; if so, our wisdom is a dear bargain.

The origin of evil has ever been an abyss, the bottom of which lies beyond the reach of human eye; and many philosophers and legislators, in their perplexity, had recourse to two principles, one good and the other evil. Typhon was the evil principle among the Egyptians, and Ahrimanes among the Persians. This divinity is well known to have been espoused by the Manichees; but these wise folks, having never conversed with either the good or the evil principle, I think they are not to be believed on their bare word.

Amidst the absurdities which swarm in the world, and may be classed among its evils, it is no slight error to suppose two almighty beings, struggling who should bear the greater sway, and making an agreement, like Moliere's two physicians: Allow me the puke, and I will allow you the bleeding.

Basilides, from the Platonics, affirmed, so early as the first century of the church, that God gave our world to be made by his lowest angels; and that by their awkwardness and ignorance things are as they are. This theological fable falls before the fatal objection, that it is not in the nature of an infinitely wise and powerful God to cause the world to be constructed by such ignorant architects.

Simon, aware of this objection, obviates it by saying, that the angel who acted as surveyor is damned for his bungling; but this does not mend our case.

Neither does the Grecian story of Pandora solve the objection any better. The box, with all evils in it, and hope remaining at the bottom, is, indeed, a charming allegory; but Vulcan made this purely for revenge, Prometheus having formed a man of mud.

The Indians are not a whit nearer the mark: God, on creating man, gave him a drug, by which he was to enjoy perpetual health. The man put his drug on his ass; the ass, being thirsty, the serpent showed it the way to a spring; and whilst the ass was drinking, the serpent made off with the drug.

The Syrians had a conceit, that the man and woman having been created in the fourth heaven, took a fancy to eat a bit of cake instead of ambrosia, their usual regale. *Ambrosia* perspired through the pores, but after eating the cake they had a motion to go to stool, and asked an angel the way to the privy. Do you see, said the angel, yon little planet, scarcely visible, about sixty millions of leagues off? that is the privy of the universe: make the best of your way thither. They marched, and there they were left to continue; and ever since our world has been what it is. But the Syrians are gravelled when asked why God permitted man to eat of the cake; and why it should be productive of such dreadful evils to us.

To shorten my journey, I shoot away from the fourth heaven to lord Bolingbroke. This personage, who, it must be allowed, had a great genius, gave the famous Pope his plan of *Whatever is is right*, which accordingly occurs, word for word, in Bolingbroke's posthumous works; and the same sentiment occurs before in lord Shaftesbury's *Characteristics*. In his treatise entitled the *Moralist* are these words:

"Much is alleged, in answer, to show why nature errs, and how she came, thus impotent and erring, from an unerring hand. But I deny she errs.—It is, on the contrary, from this order of inferior and superior things, that we admire the world's beauty, founded thus on contrarieties; whilst from

such various and disagreeing principles, a universal concord is established. Thus in the several orders of terrestrial forms, a resignation is required, a sacrifice and yielding of natures one to another. The vegetables by their death sustain the animals; and animal bodies dissolved enrich the earth, and raise again the vegetable world. Numerous insects are reduced by the superior kinds of birds and beasts; and these again are checked by man, who, in his turn, submits to other natures, and resigns his form a sacrifice in common to the rest of things. And if in natures so little exalted and pre-eminent above each other, the sacrifice of interest can appear so just, how much more reasonably may all inferior natures be subjected to the superior nature of the world!—The central powers, which hold the lasting orbs in their just poise and movement, must not be controlled to save a fleeting form, and rescue from the precipice a puny animal, whose brittle frame, however protected, must of itself so soon dissolve. The ambient air, the inward vapours, the impending meteors, or whatever else is nutrimental or preservative of this earth, must operate in a natural course; and other constitutions must submit to the good habit and constitution of the all-sustaining globe."

Bolingbroke and Shaftesbury, with Pope their artist, are not more satisfactory than the rest; their *Whatever is is right*, imports no more than that all is directed by immutable laws; and who knows not that? You tell us nothing, in observing with every child, that flies are born to be devoured by spiders; spiders by swallows; swallows by magpies; magpies by eagles; eagles to be shot by men; and men to kill each other, and to be eaten by worms; and afterwards by devils, at least, a thousand to one. Thus we see a clear and stated order throughout every species of creature, and in all things. The formation of a stone in the bladder is a wonderful mechanism; stony particles insensibly get into the blood; are filtrated in the kidneys; pass through the urethra, and settle in the bladder; and there by an admirable Newtonian attraction, concrete. The stone forms and grows, and, by the finest disposition in the world, the patient undergoes tortures worse than death: a surgeon having improved Tubal Cain's invention, comes and stabs a sharp edged instrument into the *perinæum*, and lays hold of the stone with his forceps; but, by a necessary mechanism, it breaks, as he is trying to extract it, and, by the same mechanism, the patient expires as on the rack. As whatever is is right, all this must be right: it is evidently a consequence of the unalterable physical principles granted; and I know it as well as yourself.

Had we no feeling, no objection would lie to such a system; but that is not the point: what we ask is, whether there are sensible evils? and whence they are originated? Pope, in his fourth epistle, on *Whatever is is right*, says that there is no evil, or all partial evil is universal good. An odd general good, truly; composed of the gout, the stone, pains, afflictions, crimes, sufferings, death, and damnation!

The fall of man is the plaister we lay on all these partial diseases of soul and body, which you term general health; but with Shaftesbury and Bolingbroke original sin is a mere jest, and Pope is silent about it: their system manifestly undermines Christianity, but explains nothing. It has, however, lately been countenanced by several divines, who make no difficulty of contrarieties. Well, begrudge nobody the comfort of reasoning, in his own way, on the deluge of evil with which the world is overwhelmed; incurable patients should be allowed to gratify their appetites in eating what they like. Some have even cried up this system as consolatory! A strange comfort, I own. And do you not find great relief in Shaftesbury's prescription, who says that God will not change his eternal laws for so paltry a creature as man? It must be owned, however, that this paltry animal has a right humbly to lament, and, in his lamentations, to endeavour to comprehend why those eternal laws are not adapted to the *well-being* of every individual.

This system of *Whatever is is right*, represents the author of nature merely as a powerful, cruel king, who, if he does but compass his designs, is very easy about the death, distresses, and afflictions, of his subjects. So very far, then, is the opinion of the best possible world from being consolatory, that it puzzles those philosophers who embrace it. The question of good and evil remains an inexplicable chaos to candid inquirers: cavillers may trifle with it; they are galley-slaves playing with their chains. As to the thoughtless commonalty, they are not unlike fishes taken out of a river, and put into a reservoir, little thinking they are to undergo a second removal in Lent; so we, of ourselves, are totally ignorant of the causes of our destiny.

At the end of almost every chapter of metaphysics, we should put the initials used by the Roman judges when a cause was obscure; N. L. *non liquet*—I do not understand it.

WICKED—WICKEDNESS.

We are perpetually told, that human nature is essentially perverse; that man is born a child of the devil. Nothing can be more imprudent; for, my friend, in preaching to me, that all the world is born in wickedness, thou informest me that thou art born so, and that behoves me to beware of thee, as I would of a fox or crocodile. Not at all, sayest thou; I am regenerated; I am no unbeliever or heretic; I may be trusted: so, then, the remainder of mankind, being either heretics, or what thou callest infidels, will be a mere herd of monsters; and whenever thou art speaking to a Lutheran or Turk, thou shouldst conclude that they are for robbing and murdering thee: one is not regenerated, and the other is degenerated. Much more rational and handsome would it be to say to men, You are all born good; consider how dreadful it would be to defile the purity of your being. Mankind should be dealt with as individuals. If a prebendary leads a scandalous life, a friend says to him, Is it possible that you can thus disgrace the dignity of a prebendary? A counsellor or judge is reminded that he has the honour of being counsellor to the king; and that it is his duty to be an example of virtue. The encouragement to a soldier is, Remember you belong to the regiment of Champagne: and every individual should be told, Remember your dignity as a man.

Say what you will, this must, at length, be the case: for what else can this saying mean, so common to all nations, Reflect within thyself? Now, were your origin criminal, were your blood formed of an infernal liquor, to bid you reflect within yourself, would import, Consult your diabolical nature, and follow its suggestions: cheat, rob, murder: it is your father's law!

Man is not born wicked; he becomes so, as he falls sick. Some physicians say, you are born sick; but, it is evident that they, however skilful, would not cure you, if your disease be inherent in your nature. They are themselves very sick. Bring together all the children of the universe, and you will see nothing in them but innocence, gentleness, and fear: were they born wicked, spiteful, and cruel, some signs of it would soon appear, as little snakes strive to bite, and tigers to tear. But nature having been as sparing of offensive weapons to man as to pigeons and rabbits, it cannot have given him an instinct to mischief and destruction.

If man is not born wicked, how comes it that so many are

infected with the pestilence of wickedness? It is because they who bear rule, having caught the distemper, communicate it to others, as women, having the distemper which Columbus brought from America, have spread the venom all over Europe. By the first ambitious man was the world corrupted.

You will say this first monster only fecundated that germ of pride, rapine, fraud, and cruelty, which is in all men. I own, that in general the greater part of our brethren easily contract these qualities: but has every body the putrid fever, the stone, and the gravel, because every body is liable to them?

There are whole nations which are not wicked: the Philadelphians and the Banyans have never shed human blood. The Chinese, the people of Tonquin, Lao, Siam, and even of Japan, have lived in profound tranquillity for these hundred years past. In ten years, scarcely any of those enormities at which human nature shudders is heard of in Rome, Venice, Paris, London, and Amsterdam; cities where cupidity, the mother of all crime, is flagrant.

Were men essentially wicked, and born under the sway of a being as malignant as wretched, who, in revenge for his punishment, inspired them with all his rage, we should every morning hear of husbands being murdered by their wives, and fathers by their children, just as fowls are found killed by polecats, who come in the night and suck their blood.

Suppose there are ten hundred millions of people upon the earth: this makes about five hundred millions of women, who sew and spin, feed their little ones, keep the house or hut clean, and backbite their neighbours a little. I do not see any great harm these poor simpletons do. There are, besides, at least two hundred millions of children, who certainly neither kill nor plunder, and about as many who, through age and sickness, are not capable of those crimes. Thus there remains, at most, but a hundred millions whom youth and vigour qualify for the commission of crime. Of these we may say, that ninety are continually taken up with prodigious labour, in forcing the earth to furnish them with food and raiment: now, these have scarcely time to perpetrate outrages. In the remaining ten millions will be included idlers and jocund companions, who love peace and festivity; men of talents, who are taken up with their several professions; magistrates and priests, whom it behoves to lead an irreproachable life, at least in appearance. So that the real wicked men are reduced to some few politicians, either secular or regular, who will always be for disturbing the world; and some thousands of vagrants,

who hire their services to those politicians. Now, never is a million of these wild beasts employed at once, (among these, I reckon highwaymen); so that in the most tempestuous times, there is but one man in a thousand who may be called wicked, and he is not so always.

Thus is wickedness infinitely less than is talked of and believed. To be sure, there is still too much misfortunes, distress, and horrible crime; but the pleasure of complaining and magnifying is such, that, at the least scratch, you cry out, The earth is deluged with blood. If you have been cheated, then the world is full of perjury. An atrabilarious mind, on having been wronged, sees the universe covered with damned souls; as a young rake, seated at supper with his lady, after the opera, does not dream that there are distressed objects.

THE END.

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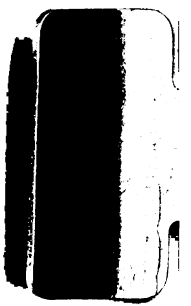

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